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Warriors: A Dark Sun

Riverclan

Leader: Icestar- jet black she cat with icy blue eyes

Deputy: Silverdust- silver tabby she cat with pale ginger patches and amber eyes

Medicine cat: Echomist- silver bengal she cat with fiery amber eyes

Warriors
Grassheart- large tom with amber eyes and a brown, red and white pelt

Grayheart- large blue eyed white tom with a gray patch on his heart, gray ears and a black tail
Apprentice Jasperpaw

Rainwhisker- fluffy gray tom with amber eyes

Duskflower- black she cat with yellow eyes
Apprentice Sparrowpaw

Snowbreeze- beautiful white she cat with hazel eyes

Berrysplash- handsome tortoiseshell tom with golden yellow eyes
Apprentice Brightpaw

Appleglow- large red tom with brown eyes

Apprentices
Jasperpaw- light brown tom with amber eyes

Sparrowpaw- Dark brown she cat with brown eyes

Brightpaw- silver tabby she cat with green eyes

Queens

Rainstorm- silver tabby she cat with blue-green eyes mother to Grassheart's kits Lilykit,(she cat with blue eyes and red and brown fur with white stripes) Owlkit (silver tabby she cat with blue eyes) and Lionkit (red tom with amber eyes)

Swanshine- white she cat with brown eyes mother to Olivekit(light gray fluffy tom with bright, dark green eyes) and Sunkit (golden tom with amber eyes)

Elders
Mintfur- pale gray she cat with a white face and light blue eyes

Littlefoot- small black she cat with big blue eyes

Rowantail- red tom with brown stripes and green eyes

Prologue

It was a warm new-leaf dawn. Everything was still and quiet. It was so peaceful and perfect. The sun was just peeking over the hills.
"NOO! Not Mapletail!" Icestar's yowl echoed. *Not him.*
"Rainwhisker, Fetch Echomist." She stared at the young warrior expectantly. The tom was staring in horror at Icestar.
"NOW RAINWHISKER! I think he's hurt." Icestar started sobbing. She was the leader that never showed pain in front of her warriors. She was too proud. Rainstorm ran forward to comfort the grieving she cat. Echomist raced into the clearing and checked the limp tom.
"I'm sorry Icestar, but Mapletail is dead." Echomist mewed. The pretty medicine cat was searching Icestar's gaze for something unseen by her Clanmates.
"Follow me." She told her leader. Icestar followed Echomist into her den and sat down with her head on her paws.
"Echomist, he is the third cat to be killed by those foxes. First Dawnpaw, then Lizardtooth and now Mapletail. Why is this happening?" Icestar asked grief still fresh in her eyes.
"I don't know. Starclan hasn't shown me anything, but I do find it odd. The foxes have always stayed to their part of the forest." Echomist sighed. It seemed as if she didn't actually believe Icestar. She looked up at the rising sun and gasped in shock. Icestar looked up worried that the foxes found the camp.
"Echomist what is it?" All Icestar saw was a sunrise. She put her head back down.
"It's a sign." Echomist breathed.
"What is?" Icestar mewed. She was still grieving, but now she was curious.
"The death of Mapletail, the early sunrises. How could I have not noticed..." Echomist trailed off,her eyes looking distant. Then she looked Icestar straight in the eyes. As fire met ice Echomist whispered,

"The sun will force peace by bringing death."

Chapter 1

"Attack!" Lilykit burst out of the nursery and jumped on her sister, Owlkit. Owlkit jumped in shock and ran to the nursery. Lilykit sighed.
"It's a game Owlkit." Lilykit called to her sister. Owlkit didn't move. She looked around for a more fun playmate. Her gaze stopped when she saw Sunkit. Lilykit raced forward and tackled Sunkit. She was delighted when he started to play fight with her. Lilykit felt a weight crash on her. She panicked and flailed around.
"Ha ha I got you!" Lionkit cheered. Lilykit and Sunkit looked at each other and then pounced on Lionkit. His cheering turned into wailing when they landed on him. Owlkit nervously stepped out of the nursery.
"Don't hurt him." Lilykit heard her sisters soft mew.
"We aren't going to hurt him. We're just playing." Lilykit rolled her eyes. *Owlkit is just to shy to play any games.*
"I certainly hope you weren't planning on hurting your brother Lilykit." She spun around and saw her father, Grassheart towering over her.
"I'm not going to." She mewed. She looked behind her father and saw elders laying in the warm green leaf sun. Jasperpaw and Sparrowpaw were sharing tongues beside the Apprentice den. Her eyes lit up. *I'm going to sleep in there one day!* The nursery entrance moved and she saw Olivekit and Swanshine walk into the clearing. Grassheart followed her gaze as it landed on Olivekit.
"Go play little one." Grassheart's purr rumbled as he turned and walked into the nursery, giving a nod to Swanshine, he disappeared into the ferns.
"Kits why don't you go listen to one of the elders stories. Doesn't that sound like fun!" Swanshine mewed cheerfully. Lilykit didn't want to hear a story.
"But I want to play!" She whined. Swanshine looked at her sternly.
"On second thought I'd love to hear a story. Come on!" Lilykit knew better than to argue with Swanshine. Owlkit nervously walked over to the elders den.
"Lionkit why don't we do something else." She whispered to her

brother.
"You heard Swanshine." Lionkit replied.
"Why don't we play leader! I'm Lilystar of Lilyclan!" She mewed excited for the new game.
"I'm Lionstar of Lionclan!" Lionkit said.
"My deputy will be... Mintfur!" The elder turned as she heard her name.
"I'm honoured to be your deputy Lilystar." Mintfur said dipping her head to the young kit.
"Well my deputy is Rainwhisker!" Lionkit looked at Rainwhisker.
"I'd love to be your deputy but I have a patrol to go on Lionkit." Rainwhisker mewed.
"Can we come?" Lilykit asked. The game was forgotten in a second.
I'm going to be the best warrior ever!
"Maybe when you're apprentices." Rainwhisker told them. He called Jasperpaw, Sparrowpaw and Snowbreeze then left the camp.
"Kits! Come back to the nursery it's getting dark!" Rainstorm called.
Owlkit ran to her mother's side. Lilykit and Lionkit followed.
Lionkit lay down and almost automatically fell asleep. Owlkit curled up beside Rainstorm.
"I'm going to be leader one day Rainstorm!" Lilykit bragged.
"Not if I beat you to it!" Sunkit mewed.
"When I'm leader, I'll make you deputy Sunkit." She promised.
Lilykit yawned.
"Go to sleep, Lilykit." Rainstorm's soft mew made her feel safe and warm.
"Rainstorm, when can I be leader?" She asked sleepily.
"When you are a big brave warrior. For now you are a kit, little one." Her mother told her as she wrapped her tail around Lionkit and pulled him closer to her belly.
"Goodnight Rainstorm." Lilykit said before falling asleep.
"Goodnight my beautiful kit."

Chapter 2

The bright sunlight streamed through the nursery walls. Lilykit sat up and yawned. She looked around and only Owlkit and Sunkit were in the nursery with her. She started washing her fur.
"Owlkit, where's Rainstorm?" She asked her sister between licks.
"With Icestar and Swanshine. They were talking about apprentices." Owlkit nervously replied. *Of course! We are almost six moons old!*
"Do you mind being quieter! I was dreaming." Sunkit growled as he rolled over.
"Come on Owlkit, let's leave Grumpykit in here to sleep." She mewed. Owlkit purred at her joke and padded out of the den. It was a beautiful day, there wasn't a cloud in sight. She loved days like this.
"Do you want to play moss ball?" Lilykit asked even though she knew the answer.
"No thanks, I'll just watch." Owlkit mewed as she walked over and sat beside the elders. Mintfur's eyes brightened and she started to clean Owlkit's fur.
"Young cats should look their best." Mintfur purred as she cleaned the kit.
Bored, Lilykit walked around the camp until she saw Lionkit and Olivekit sitting at the entrance to Icestar's den. She walked over to the two toms and sat down.
"What are you doing?" She asked curiously. Lionkit glared at her.
"Shh! Do you want to get caught?" He hissed. They shrank down when the leader stepped out. Lilykit looked up at Icestar and felt scared, the leader's eyes were unnaturally blue, but they burned with fire. She hid behind Olivekit and wished she could disappear.
Olivekit yelped in pain.
"Get your claws out of my back!" He growled. She looked down and saw her claws firmly stuck in his back.
"Sorry." She mumbled and sheathed her claws. She looked up at Icestar and saw amusement in her eyes.
"Kits, you know that you aren't supposed to be spying." Icestar said sternly. Lionkit and Olivekit lowered their heads in shame, but Lilykit raised her chin and was about to speak when Lionkit flicked

her ear with his tail.
"We're sorry." Lionkit and Olivekit mewed.
"We were just curious about what you were talking about!" Lilykit blurted out.
Lionkit and Olivekit looked at her shocked as she had just interrupted the leader. Icestar looked down at her admiringly.
"We were talking about your apprentice ceremony." Icestar mewed.
Excitement flooded through Lilykit. Rainstorm and Swanshine stepped out of the den.
"If you kits don't stop spying, you will have to wait another moon." Swanhine warned. Lilykit's heart lurched. *Another moon? I can't wait that long! What if Sunkit becomes leader before me!*
"We'll stop spying, Swanshine!" Lilykit said quickly.
"I expect no less." Icestar mewed. Then she turned and walked into her den. Swanshine walked into the nursery and Rainstorm went and sat with Silverdust.
"Don't worry, You aren't the first kits to get in trouble." Lilykit spun around and say Brightpaw standing behind her.
"I remember I got in big trouble for sneaking into Echomist's den and eating a poppy seed." Brightpaw mewed. *Spying is nothing compared to what she did!*
"Brightpaw are you going to join the patrol!" Berrysplash yelled from the camp entrance.
"I'm coming! Stay out of trouble kits." The silver apprentice ran over to the entrance, where Berrysplash, Grayheart, Appleglow and Duskflower were waiting.
"We should follow them." Lionkit whispered. Olivekit nodded with mischief in his eyes.
"No! I've gotten in enough trouble today!" Lilykit said shocked at the idea.
"Fine. You stay here." Lionkit mewed. He turned and walked behind the warriors den and disappeared. Olivekit followed and glanced back at Lilykit, inviting her. She quickly shook her head and Olivekit's tail drooped, but he followed Lionkit into the green bushes and left.

Chapter 3

"I told you, you shouldn't have gone out." Lilykit reminded her brother when he entered camp with a furious Appleglow.
"Yeah, yeah I get it." Lionkit grumbled.
Olivekit hadn't returned yet. She was starting to get worried. *What if a fox caught him!* As if reading her mind Lionkit mewed.
"Olivekit is stronger than you think he wouldn't be beaten that quickly." Lilykit relaxed. *Lionkit is right, Olivekit is strong for a kit.* But that didn't comfort her. There was yowling outside but one yowl was louder than the others.
"Olivekit where were you!" Yelled Swanshine. The kits ran outside to see Olivekit with a tiny fish in his jaws. He set the fish down.
"Hunting." He replied simply without a care in the world. Lilykit was impressed that he had caught something.
"What is all the yowling about!" Icestar yelled. The leader jumped onto the large rock in the middle of the camp. The camp went silent as they saw their leader.
"Olivekit went hunting and caught a fish!" Lilykit mewed admiringly. Olivekit looked at her and nodded his thanks.
"Olivekit, since you decided to disobey the warrior code, you are not becoming an apprentice for another moon as well as Lionkit." Icestar stared down at the two kits with disappointment.
"I want to wait with my brother!" Sunkit yowled from the nursery entrance and ran to nuzzle his brother. Olivekit gave him a lick between the ears.
"Sunkit, it is not your punishment. You don't have to wait." Icestar told the golden kit. Lilykit watched the whole thing in shock. *Lionkit isn't going to be an apprentice for another moon!* She was glad she didn't go with them, but she was sad that her brother was being punished.
"I want to wait, Icestar. It is my apprenticeship and I wish to spend it with my brother." Sunkit lifted his chin and proudly mewed to the leader. Lilykit admired his confidence. He spoke like he was just talking to another kit and not the clan leader. She expected Icestar to be furious at the kit.
"Very well. If you wish to be a kit for longer, then you shall stay at

kit. I admire your loyalty to your brother Sunkit." Icestar mewed respectfully. Lilykit's mouth opened in shock. *The leader respects him and he is only a kit!*
"I have better news for three apprentices." Icestar's voice echoed through the camp. Jasperpaw, Sparrowpaw and Brightpaw looked at each other with joy.
"I, Icestar, leader of Riverclan call my warrior ancestors to look upon these apprentices. They have trained hard to understand the way of your noble code. do you promise to protect and defend this clan even at the cost of your lives?"
"I do." The apprentices mewed in unison.
"Then by the powers of Starclan, I give you your warrior names. Jasperpaw from this moment on you shall be known as Jasperheart. Starclan honours your strength and quick thinking. Sparrowpaw from this moment on you shall be know as Sparrowleaf. Starclan honours your loyalty and intelligence. Brightpaw from this moment on you shall be known as Brightcloud. Starclan honours your patience and determination. We welcome you as full warriors of Riverclan!" Icestar announced.
"Jasperheart! Sparrowleaf! Brightcloud! Jasperheart! Sparrowleaf! Brightcloud!" The clan cheered the new warriors names into the night. *That's going to be me one day! I'm going to be a warrior!*

Chapter 4

It had been a moon since the warrior ceremony and all the kits decided to wait for Lionkit and Olivekit. Lilykit was bouncing around the nursery when Rainstorm stopped her.
"You're going to mess up your fur!" Rainstorm mewed frustrated. "I want you to look your best when you become apprentices." Rainstorm held Lilykit down as she finished washing them. Lilykit had waited forever to be an apprentice. When the other kits were done being washed Rainstorm left them with Swanshine and went into the clearing.
"Can we go outside now?" Lilykit whined. Even Owlkit was bouncing around which surprised them all.
"Wait until Icestar calls you." Swanshine told the kits. Lilykit looked outside the nursery walls and saw that Grassheart and Rainstorm were already siting outside with Grayheart.
"Let all cats old enough to swim gather under the Tallstone for a clan meeting!" Icestar called the clan together. Lilykit could hardly sit still. She wanted to jump outside and go into the forest that second.
"Calmly walk outside now."
Swanshine mewed. Lilykit ran outside and tripped over her own paws and fell. She quickly got up and tried to hide her embarrassment by licking her chest fur.
Owlkit stepped out of the nursery calmly and she carefully walked up to the front of the Tallstone where Lilykit waited. Lionkit, Sunkit and Olivekit ran out of the nursery at the same time and almost crashed into Lilykit and Owlkit.
"We are lucky to have so many kits, but kits become apprentices and that is why I have called you here today." Icestar began. Lilykit suddenly worried who her mentor would be.
"Owlkit, from this day forward until you have earned your warrior name you shall be known as Owlpaw. Silverdust, you have shown bravery and patience, may you pass this onto Owlpaw. Lionkit, from this day forward until you have earned your warrior name you shall be known as Lionpaw. Appleglow, you have shown strength and intelligence, may you pass this onto Lionpaw. Olivekit, from

this day forward until you have earned your warrior name you shall be known as Olivepaw. Rainwhisker, you have shown honesty and quick thinking, may you pass this onto Olivepaw. Sunkit, from this day forward until you have earned your warrior name you shall be known as Sunpaw. Snowbreeze, you have shown determination and loyalty, may you pass this onto Sunpaw. Lilykit from this day forward until you have earned your warrior name you shall be known as Lilypaw. Grayheart, you have shown strength and courage, may you pass this onto Lilypaw." Icestar finished the ceremony. Lilypaw shyly walked over to Grayheart.
"Don't be nervous." Grayheart's voice rumbled. The new apprentices touched noses with their mentors. The clan started cheering for them.
"Owlpaw! Lionpaw! Olivepaw! Sunpaw! Lilypaw!"
Lilypaw felt pride and was excited to start training. *I'm an apprentice now! Soon I'll be a warrior and then leader!*

Chapter 5

"What are we doing now? Hunting? Battle training? A BORDER PATROL!?" Lilypaw circled her mentor excitement flooding her from nose to tail. The other apprentices had already left and she was anxious to leave camp.
"Lilypaw! Calm down." Grayheart growled. Lilypaw tried sitting still but her tail was taunting her so she pounced on it.
"You are going to be a hard one to train, aren't you?" Grayheart mumbled.
"What are we doing?" Lilypaw asked.
"We should put your energy to good use let's go hunting." Grayheart started to lead the way to the river. Lilypaw followed in awe of every stone or blade of grass on the way there. When they finally arrived at the river there was a clearing where trees surrounded the opening and sunlight warmed the smooth rock surface. Lilypaw wanted to bask in the sun but she had a more important job.
"Lilypaw, get over here. All you have to do is dive in the water and catch a fish. Not even a kit could mess that up." Grayheart grumbled. *Why did I have to get such a grumpy mentor.* She dived into the cold river and swan around trying to find a fish.
"Not like that you fishbrain, you're scaring all the fish away!" Grayheart hissed at her. She was hot with anger towards the warrior, but she held her tongue. She dived again and saw fish. She caught one with her claws and brought it up to the river bank and lauded it down on the rocks. It was jumping around, desperate for water, but she held it down.
"Kill it for Starclans sake!" Grayheart growled. It was too late and the fish jumped back in the river.
"There goes the elders meal." Grayheart glared at the apprentice. Lilypaw's anger reached its limit and she exploded with rage.
"WELL, MAYBE IF YOU HELPED ME INSTEAD OF SUNNING YOURSELF I WOULD HAVE CAUGHT IT!" Lilypaw yelled at the warrior. Grayheart was about to speak but Lilypaw interrupted him.
"You are my mentor! I don't know why Icestar put me with a useless fishbrain but she did so you're stuck with me, Grayheart!" The last of Lilypaw's anger faded and she saw a shocked warrior crouching

in front of her.
"Grayheart... I'm sorry I was mad I didn't catch the fish." She apologized. She felt shame burn her ears. *He's a warrior and I'm just a small apprentice.* Grayheart chuckled and licked his chest fur.
"Icestar said you would be a challenge. You have earned my respect young one. But to remember this I'm going to call you Ragepaw."
The white warrior dipped his head to the young cat. Lilypaw was shocked as she had just earned a warrior's respect by yelling at him. *Maybe Grayheart isn't as bad as I thought.* Grayheart stood up and stretched.
"Come on let's get back to camp, Ragepaw."

Chapter 6

"Did you really say that!" Lionpaw mewed excitedly. Lilypaw had returned back to camp and told her denmates all about her hunting lesson with Grayheart.
"Did he really call you Ragepaw?" Sunpaw breathed.
"You should respect the senior warriors more than that." Owlpaw's quiet mew came from the corner of the den. Everyone looked at her in shock, except Sunpaw.
"Grayheart had no right to bully her like that, Owlpaw." Lionpaw growled at the shaking apprentice. Owlpaw backed down, shivering.
"Yes Lionpaw." Owlpaw whimpered. Lilypaw looked at her and felt bad that she was always treated like the runt.
"Well, she does have a point." Sunpaw mewed.
"Whatever. I'm going hunting." Olivepaw snorted. He left the camp with his mentor and Jasperheart.
"Owlpaw needs to learn to stand up for herself." Lionpaw hissed. "Sunpaw won't always be there to defend her."
"Yeah." She absentmindedly mewed. She was looking at Sunpaw comforting Owlpaw. They looked like mates sitting there and grooming each other. *Maybe Owlpaw is growing up faster than us.*
Brightcloud padded into the camp with a large fish in her mouth.
"I'm going to go and sit with Brightcloud." She mewed at Lionpaw.
Lilypaw padded over to her friend. Brightcloud looked at her and her eyes brightened up.
"Lilypaw! Can you help me take this to the elders?" Brightcloud asked the young apprentice.
"Of course!" Lilypaw grabbed the fish in her jaws and dragged it over to the elders den. Littlefoot and Mintfur looked up at the two dragging the fish over to them. They set the fish down in their den then sat down.
"Where's Rowantail?" Lilypaw asked the two she cats.
"He had a cough so he went to see Echomist." Mintfur replied her mouth full of the fish.
"I can go take some to him." Lilypaw offered.
"I'm sure he would love that." Littlefoot purred. Lilypaw ripped off a

large chunk off the fish and walked over to the medicine den. She stepped into the small den and saw Rowantail. Echomist was sitting beside him pushing herbs towards him. He let out a raspy cough and his eyes and nose were running.
"Echomist, I have some fish for Rowantail." She mewed and started to walk towards the sick elder.
"No!" Echomist leaped forward. She blocked the way to the elder. "He has whitecough. I'll take the prey to him but you aren't allowed in the den." Echomist whispered in her ear. She was shocked. The frail old elder looked in pain and he started coughing again. Echomist turned, with the fish in her jaws, and stepped towards the elder. With a flick of the medicine cat's tail, l
Lilypaw knew she was dismissed. *Is Rowantail going to die? He can't die!* She padded back to the other elders where they were gossiping with Brightcloud. She sat down beside Littlefoot and listened.
"We may have new kits in the nursery soon." Mintfur purred.
"Who's having kits?" Lilypaw asked.
"Sparrowleaf." Brightcloud mewed excited for her sister. Lilypaw gasped.
"But she has only been a warrior for three moons!" Lilypaw was surprised that Sparrowleaf was having kits. "Who's the father?" The three she cats chuckled.
"It's obviously Jasperheart." Brightcloud purred. *There will be new kits soon!*

Chapter 7

"Echomist! Sparrowleaf is kitting!" Swanshine yelled across the camp, then turned and went back into the den. Lilypaw's eyes brightened at the mention of Sparrowleaf's kits. Then she worried for the safety of the young queen.
"I'm coming!" Echomist mewed through a bundle of herbs. She padded into the nursery. The whole clan was worried for the queen, as most queens were older than her, but no one was more worried than Jasperheart.
"Make sure she is okay." Jasperheart mewed into the den. Lilypaw was excited for the kits, but also worried. Echomist said there would only be one kit. She heard pained yowling coming from the nursery. Jasperheart tried to get in the nursery at the sound of Sparrowleaf in pain. Brightcloud blocked him and quietly told him an order. He nodded and ran out of the camp.
"I know we are all excited for the kits to come, but regular duties must continue." Silverdust stood up and told all the cats in the camp. "I want a border patrol, Berrysplash, choose your own warriors. Snowbreeze, take Owlpaw, Grayheart and Lilypaw and go hunting." Foxwillow ordered. Lilypaw sighed and stood up. she met her sister at the entrance. Jasperheart raced into the camp with a large ball of soaking wet moss.
"Come on. Let's go catch something for Sparrowleaf." Snowbreeze happily mewed. Snowbreeze always seemed happy and hopeful. Lilypaw had asked her about it and all she said was, There is no time to be mad or hateful, Lilypaw life is just too short. Lilypaw now respected the white she cats happiness and hope. She had learned a valuable lesson from her. But right now she had to focus on hunting. The patrol reached the river and they all dived in. Owlpaw came up with a small carp. Snowbreeze caught a small trout, but Grayheart caught the biggest fish she had ever seen. All Lilypaw caught was a small trout.
"This is enough let's get back to camp." Snowbreeze mewed after a while of hunting. Lilypaw was glad, all she wanted to do was check on Sparrowleaf. When they got back, everyone was cheering so she thaught everything was alright.

"Can i go take my prey to Sparrowleaf?" Lilypaw asked her mentor.
"Of course." Grayheart's deep voice rumbled. She picked up her catch and ran to the nursery. She let out a mew to let them know she was there. Jasperheart was already there sitting with his mate and kits. Sparrowleaf looked at Lilypaw.
"Is that prey?" Sparrowleaf asked hopefully. Lilypaw nodded.
"Would you like to see the two newest members of Riverclan?" The new mother asked Lilypaw. Lilypaw nodded eagerly. Sparrowleaf moved her tail and revealed two squirming kits.
"The she cat's name is Skykit and the tom's is Adderkit." Jasperheart mewed proudly. She looked into the nest and saw two kits, Skykit looked just like her mother except her sky blue eyes. Adderkit was a light brown tom with a dark brown tail and stripes.
"They are beautiful." She purred. She noticed how weak Sparrowleaf looked and dismissed herself. She went to the apprentices den, she was so exhausted that she fell asleep almost the second she lay down on the moss. She fell into a peaceful dreamless sleep.

Chapter 8

"Lilypaw! Come play with us!" Adderkit squeaked as Lilypaw stepped out of the apprentice den. Lionpaw and Olivepaw were sitting at the fresh kill pile sharing a fish. She heard her belly rumbling and padded to the two toms and sat down.
"I'd love to after I'm done eating." Lilypaw called over her shoulder to the kits. Skykit looked disappointed, but Adderkit just shrugged and called to Olivepaw. "Hey Olivepaw! Can you teach us how to hunt?' Adderkit asked the large apprentice. Olivepaw rolled his eyes.
"I don't play with kits." He snapped at the young tom. Lilypaw looked at him in shock. Everyone was kind and played with the kits. Olivepaw was acting so arrogant lately, he was acting like he was the leader and when Sunpaw joked around and called him Olivestar he snapped. Sunpaw was given a powerful slap to the nose.
"I'll teach you how to hunt." Sunpaw mewed to Adderkit. The golden tom looked at his brother with worry in his eyes. Lilypaw was also worried about Olivepaw. She remembered when they were kits Olivepaw would always beg Jasperheart, to teach him battle moves. He was always so disappointed when Jasperheart said no. Lilypaw expected that he would want to make the kits happy.
"Lilypaw, Appleglow wants us on his patrol." Grayheart's voice rumbled in her ear. She stood up and padded to the camp entrance, where Appleglow, Brightcloud, Jasperheart and Grayheart waited.
"Where are we going?" She asked Brightcloud. "ThunderClan border." Brightcloud replied. Lilypaw nodded then continued walking. Brightcloud sped up to walk with Jasperheart. Lilypaw was left walking alone at the back of the patrol. She looked up and saw clouds covering the sun. She had always loved leaf-fall weather. It was a lot easier for her to hunt land prey. As they were passing the river she heard squealing and her eyes darted to the fast moving water. Appleglow stopped the patrol.
"I heard a kit." He explained. Jasperheart immediately looked behind the patrol, searching the leaves for his kits. "Spread out and look for it." Appleglow ordered. Lilypaw searched the riverbank for the kit. She heard another squeal and desperate call for help. "I

found it!" She yowled before sliding down the steep riverbank. She looked around and saw a muddy kit struggling to drag a thin queen, most likely the kit's mother, up the slope. She approached the kit and saw that it was a she cat. The first thing she noticed was how thin she was. She felt a stab of pity for the poor thing. She looked at the queen and saw that her eyes were glazed over and showed fear. Lilypaw felt bad that the last thing the queen saw was fear. She noticed a hole in the queen's belly, probably stabbed by a rock.
"Help me! Mama's hurt!" The little kit yowled. "I'm slipping!" She darted forward and grabbed the kit by the scruff of her neck. Jasperheart scrambled down the slope and grabbed the dead queen before she was lost in the river. They dragged the kit and queen up to the forest above where everyone was waiting. "Brightcloud! Run back and get Echomist!" Grayheart yelled at the she cat. Brightcloud nodded then raced into the forest.
Lilypaw set the kit down on a patch of moss. She started to clean her while Appleglow and Grayheart tried to wake the queen up.
"What's your name?" Lilypaw asked the frightened kit.
"Pixie. My mama's name is Rosie." Pixie wailed. Lilypaw could see why the queen was called Rosie, she must have been beautiful. She had pale ginger fur and brown eyes. Pixie had her eyes, but that's it. Pixie had white fur with very pale gray stripes. The kit was very beautiful, but looked unnaturally small even for a kit. Echomist and Brightcloud raced into the clearing. Echomist practically pushed Appleglow over to inspect Rosie. Echomist looked at the kit with sadness in her eyes.
"I'm sorry. Your mother is dead, little one. The clan will now take care of you." Echomist told the kit. The medicine cat nodded to Appleglow and Lilypaw. Appleglow started dragging the queen, while Lilypaw picked the grieving kit up and started the walk home.

Chapter 9

As the patrol neared camp Jasperheart and Brightcloud went with Echomist to make sure Icestar knew they were bringing a kit. She could hear Pixie whimpering and nothing she tried to say made the kit feel better. When they reached camp she let Pixie walk beside her. Pixie saw all the cats waiting in the clearing and hid under Lilypaw's belly. Lilypaw gave a small purr.
"It's all right,Pixie. They won't hurt you." She whispered to the kit. Pixie didn't move. Lilypaw sighed and nudged the white ball of fur forward. Pixie took a deep breath then walked into the clearing with Lilypaw by her side. Icestar was on the Tallstone waiting for the patrol to find a spot. Lilypaw didn't want to leave Pixie so she sat with her near the front of the gathered cats.
"As you may have noticed, a patrol has returned and they brought a kit back with them." Icestar calmly told the clan. The clan murmured in shock until they were silenced. "Sparrowleaf has agreed to feed her and take care of her. But there is still her name. Her name shall be,"
"No!" The clan turned and looked at the little kit."No. My name is Pixie." She mewed to the leader. All Icestar did was nod.
"Pixie would it be okay if you took the clan name of Pixiekit?" Icestar asked Pixie. Pixie nodded and looked up at Lilypaw and whispered. "I am Pixiekit."
"You are all dismissed." Icestar mewed as she jumped off the Tallstone. Lilypaw watched the leader go into Echomist's den, but at the last second Icestar glanced back at Lilypaw and smiled at the apprentice and kit. Then she disappeared into the fern den.
"Pixiekit, you should go and meet Sparrowleaf." Jasperheart mewed to Pixiekit.
"If Sparrowleaf is my new mother, does that mean you are my father?" Pixiekit asked the brown warrior.
"I guess it does." Jasperheart purred. Lilypaw left Pixiekit to bond with her new family. Adderkit and Skykit tumbled out of the nursery and raced over to Pixiekit. Pixiekit slapped Adderkit away when he got to close. "I'm so sorry. You just scared me." Pixiekit apologized. Lilypaw purred and walked over to the dirtplace. As she

passed the medicine den, she heard Echomist and Icestar talking quietly. Curious, she crouched beside the den and listened.
"Have you thought about the prophecy?" Icestar whispered. "Yes I have. I have also got news." Echomist whispered back. "The sun will force peace by bringing death. Only the frost, who's bite as cold as ice can stop the sun." Lilypaw stepped back, shocked. *Does she mean Sunpaw?* She raced to the apprentice den and sat in her nest to think about what she just heard. *Owlpaw!* Her sister was really close with Sunpaw. *Is Owlpaw in danger?*

Chapter 10

Lilypaw leaped at the mouse that was searching the snow for seeds. She caught it and killed it before it knew what was going on. She had been an apprentice for 4 moons. She wasn't the best fisher, but she was a brilliant land hunter. Lilypaw picked up her mouse and started to walk into camp. The snow crunched when she walked and the frost on the trees sparkled in the sunlight making the forest more beautiful than she'd ever seen.
"Lilypaw! You're back!" Pixiekit squealed as she entered the camp. Lilypaw had sort of become the white kit's big sister. She played with the kit, told her stories about her patrols and the other clans and she taught Pixiekit how to swim. Pixiekit adored Lilypaw and Lilypaw adored Pixiekit. Adderkit was jealous of the attention Pixiekit was getting from their mother. Skykit understood that Pixiekit needed extra attention because she was smaller and it seemed Pixiekit was not growing properly.
"Can you tell me how you caught that mouse?" Pixiekit begged with huge brown eyes gazing up at her. "Please." Lilypaw chuckled and sat down to tell her all about the mouse and how beautiful the forest was. Pixiekit stared up at her in awe of the beauty and excitement of her story.
"You are really good at story telling Lilypaw." Pixiekit breathed. The little kit looked behind Lilypaw and her eyes lit up. Lilypaw turned around and saw Jasperheart padding over to Pixiekit and Lilypaw.
"Hey Lilypaw, Icestar wants you to go to the gathering tonight." The brown tom mewed. Lilypaw had gone to 2 gatherings already and both were rather boring. She nodded to the brown warrior.
"Who else is going?" She asked Jasperheart.
"Echomist, Silverdust, Grayheart, Duskflower, Appleglow, Sunpaw and Lionpaw." He paused. "Oh! Myself, Swanshine, Rainwhisker and Berrysplash." She thanked Jasperheart and turned in the direction of the elders den.

The elders den had seemed empty since Rowantail has died. It was green cough that killed him. Not even Echomist could help him. Mintfur had been devastated, as the tom was her mate. Grassheart and Echomist were still grieving for their father. She stepped into

the den and only Littlefoot raised her head.
"Hello?" Lilypaw mewed. Mintfur still didn't look up.
"She's asleep. Don't wake her up." Littlefoot quietly warned. She dipped her head to the elder and sat down.
"Are you going to the gathering?" She whispered to the elder.
Littlefoot shook her head. "I'm staying behind to look after Mintfur."
Lilypaw was worried about Mintfur because she had never seen her grandmother so sad. Not even Pixiekit could make her smile. All Mintfur did was sit outside with her head on her paws and sleep.
"I know you are worried about her, but she is just grieving. She'll be better by next moon, you'll see." Littlefoot comforted the apprentice.
Lilypaw stood up and said goodbye to Littlefoot before joining the cats going to the gathering. She walked beside Sunpaw and Lionpaw. They didn't say a word to her. The group started to walk to the gathering island. The other clans hated water so they used the tree trunk bridge. Riverclan swam across to get to the island.
Once they got to the gathering the Riverclan cats spread out leaving Lilypaw alone. Before she knew it she was sitting between two warriors, Raggedmoon of Shadowclan and Mouserise of Thunderclan. Raggedmoon was nice, but Mouserise didn't seem to like talking. She remembered that she was talking with the Shadowclan deputy and quickly dipped her head. As Raggedmoon was about to reply, Lizardstar, the Shadowclan leader yowled signaling the gathering had started.
"Prey is running well in Shadowclan and we have a new warrior. Ravenleap!" The clans started cheering for the new warrior.
Lizardstar stepped back and Brackenstar stepped forward.
"We have a new apprentice in Thunderclan, Badgerpaw! The prey has been hard to find this leafbare, but we will survive."
Brackenstar finished then Dawnstar stepped up.
"We are still grieving about Runningstar, but the clan must go on. Rabbits have been running well despite the snow." The new leader nodded to Icestar, signaling she could start.
" I'm very sad to report that we have lost one of our elders, Rowantail." Icestar paused to let the other Clans' elders grieve. "We have taken in a lost kit whose name is Pixiekit. She is being cared for by Sparrowleaf." Icestar stepped back and Lizardstar yowled that the gathering was over. All the Riverclan cats started walking home.
Halfway there they met a panicking Littlefoot.
"Littlefoot what are you doing this far from camp?" Icestar asked the

elder.
"It's Mintfur! I can't find her anywhere!"

Chapter 11

"She might just be taking a walk." Silverdust suggested. Lilypaw was stunned. Was she okay? What if a fox got her?
"I want Rainwhisker, Grayheart, Jasperheart and Lilypaw to search for her. Littlefoot and the rest of us will return to camp and search there." Icestar ordered. Lilypaw nodded to her leader then waited with her mentor. She looked up into Grayheart's eyes and saw worry. Rainwhisker's voice snapped her out of her thoughts.
"I want Jasperheart and Lilypaw to search the forest. Grayheart and I will search near the river. She's an elder, she couldn't have gotten far." Rainwhisker ordered the small group. She ran beside Jasperheart as they searched the forest for Mintfur. They heard a fox bark and decided to avoid the fox.
"I could climb a tree and search from above." Lilypaw suggested. Jasperheart nodded at the idea. She carefully clawed her way up the nearest tree. *Riverclan is meant to swim, not climb.* When she got to the top she looked around and didn't see anything out of the ordinary. She slid down the smooth birch trunk and landed beside Jasperheart.
"Did you see anything?" Jasperheart asked the second she hit the ground. She shook her head and Jasperheart sighed.
"Where are you Mintfur?" He mumbled to himself. Lilypaw was wondering the same thing when they heard a desperate yowl. Lilypaw ran side by side with Jasperheart towards the source of the yowl. They reached a small clearing with only a fallen tree trunk in the snow. Jasperheart sat down confused as they were sure the yowl came from here. Lilypaw didn't give up so easily. She walked over to the trunk cautiously. Lilypaw heard a weak moan from behind the tree. She jumped over the tree full of hope. Her hope burst like a bubble when she saw Mintfur. She was missing an ear and she had claw marks all over her body. Mintfur was drenched in fox scent and she was bleeding badly.
"Jasperheart! I found her! Go find Echomist!" She yowled at the warrior. Jasperheart didn't question her and he just ran off into the dark forest. Lilypaw looked back at Mintfur, grief hit her like a wave when she realized there was no hope. Mintfur opened her

eyes a little and tried to purr.
"Mintfur! Hush, don't waste your breath." She soothed the dying elder.
"Oh sweet Lilypaw, you know there is no hope for me. I have had a long life, I've had kits and grandkits." The elder paused and drew a pained, raspy breath.
"I've watched you grow up Lilypaw. I couldn't have been prouder. You will be a great warrior. I have high hopes for you." Mintfur's eyes rolled to the back of her head and just as Jasperheart ran into the clearing with Echomist, Mintfur whispered with her dying breath.
"Don't let me down, Lilypaw."

Chapter 12

Lilypaw sobbed beside her grandmother's body. "I'll make you proud. I promise." She promised even though she knew Mintfur couldn't hear her. Jasperheart helped her up then started to drag Mintfur's still warm body. Echomist fell in beside Lilypaw and rested her tail on the grieving apprentice's shoulder. Lilypaw pushed it off as she didn't want sympathy. She wanted Mintfur. Echomist just moved her tail and let Lilypaw grieve alone. When they got back to camp Lilypaw blocked out the shocked whispers and numbly walked to the apprentice den. Owlpaw tried to sooth Lilypaw, but all Lilypaw wanted to do was sleep. She started to feel more grateful towards her sister. With the help of the rhythmic strokes of Owlpaw's tongue, Lilypaw feel into a deep dreamless sleep. When the apprentice woke up she was alone in the den. She heard Owlpaw walking in through the narrow den entrance. "Grayheart says you can take the day off." Owlpaw softly mewed. Lilypaw nodded then sat back down and watched everyone walk around the camp. Pixiekit came up to Lilypaw, but Lilypaw just turned her head away from the white kit. She knew that she had hurt Pixiekit, but she didn't care. Lilypaw wanted to be alone. Adderkit had learned to be fiercely protective of Skykit and Pixiekit. Adderkit marched over to the red apprentice. Lilypaw batted him away, growling how she couldn't get peace in this dump. Lilypaw saw everyone staring at her in shock as she was usually gentle with the kits. She growled at Olivepaw when he tried to comfort her. "I don't need a useless tom to take care of me! I'm not a kit!" She snarled at the gray tom. His eyes, that a second ago were filled with warmth and grief, turned ice cold and unforgiving. He turned around and padded into the den without looking back. Lilypaw felt awful, but she didn't need his sympathy. She didn't need anyone. Lilypaw stood up and walked out the camp entrance. The ferns rustled around her as she squeezed out the entrance. Lilypaw raced into the forest, the snow making her paws pads hard and cold. She felt tears streaming down her cheeks. She missed Mintfur so much. Lilypaw ran to the spot where she had found Mintfur's body the night before. She could still smell her grandmother's warm scent,

but by now it was stale. Lilypaw smelled fox and stiffened in rage. *Mintfur would still be alive if it weren't for that beast!* She padded into the clearing and looked at the tree trunk and gasped when she saw the biggest fox she had ever seen, sniffing around the fallen tree. Lilypaw felt her eyes harden with rage. She yowled and jumped on the fox, scratching it's face. The fox snarled and shook her off. Lilypaw took a second to catch her breath then leaped on the fox's back. The fox bit her front paw in the struggle to free itself. Lilypaw yowled in pain. She ignored the throbbing pain in her paw and slashed the fox again and again in the face. She ripped off one of the fox's ears and the fox snarled furiously. Then the wild beast batted the apprentice against the fallen tree. Lilypaw hit the tree then fell with a dull thump. She struggled to catch her breath and yowled in agony. She felt a sharp pain in her chest and she had sprained her leg. The fox walked menacingly slow towards the weak she cat. *This is it. This is where I die.* The fox got so close that she could feel it's breath, hot on her cheek. She was filled with pain and desperation. Then a flash of silver hit the fox on the side of it's massive face. The fox staggered and tried to shake the cat off. Lilypaw gasped in surprise when she saw that Owlpaw had come to her rescue. Lilypaw yowled in joy. Owlpaw slashed the fox repeatedly in the face. All Lilypaw's joy padded abruptly when Owlpaw tripped on a root and fell, revealing her soft white belly. The fox saw an opportunity and took it. It leaped forward and started slicing Owlpaw's belly with it's sharp claws. Owlpaw's shrieks must have reached the ThunderClan camp. Lilypaw sat, frozen with horror, but the sight of her sister fighting for her life snapped her out of her shock.
"NO!! OWLPAW! HELP!"

Chapter 13

Lilypaw shrieked in horror and bolted up trying to ignore the throbbing coming from her leg. She limped as fast as she could to her sister and slashed the fox with fury. She yowled and shrieked until she heard three animals burst into the clearing. The wounded apprentice twisted to look behind her and saw Snowbreeze, Grassheart and Icestar. She was shocked that the leader had come to their rescue. Lilypaw saw fury cover the leader's icy glare when she saw the fox while Grassheart's eyes glazed with terror at seeing his daughter being mauled by the fox. Snowbreeze turned and ran back to camp to get Echomist. Icestar and Grassheart fought the fox with fury and finally it's ran off. Icestar bolted towards Lilypaw and Grassheart quickly grabbed Owlpaw. Icestar had worry and anger in her gaze, but she said nothing as they waited for Echomist. With Snowbreeze being one of the fastest warriors in the clan, Echomist arrived quickly. Echomist rushed over to Owlpaw, who now had blood staining the snow and her belly. "Snowbreeze! Get cobwebs! Grassheart! Push on her belly! Icestar! Get marigold!" Echomist shouted orders at the warriors.
"What should I do?" Lilypaw asked wanting to help her sister.
"You've done enough." Grassheart growled at his daughter. Lilypaw stepped back, feeling more hurt than when she broke her leg. She backed into Icestar who was sternly glaring at Grassheart.
"That is no way to treat her Grassheart. Especially after all she has gone through." Icestar coldly told the large warrior. The leader looked down at Lilypaw in pity and Lilypaw felt her ears burn in shame at being pitied. Icestar started sniffing around Lilypaw's leg.
"It's only sprained not broken." Icestar announced. Echomist stood up and sighed. The beautiful medicine cat's eyes were glazed with grief and worry.
"She'll live, but the damage is bad. She probably won't be training until next leaf-bare. No matter what happens now if she has kits in the future, the birth will kill her."

Chapter 14

"We better get back to camp. Rainstorm will want to know that her kit has been injured." Grassheart growled at Lilypaw. Icestar leaped to her feet. "It's not her fault Grassheart! How many times do I have to tell you that the fox is to blame!" Icestar snarled at the red tom. Grassheart glared at Icestar, but knew better than to argue with his leader. The tom grabbed Owlpaw by the scruff of her neck and dragged her through the snow, leaving a trail of red behind. Echomist and Snowbreeze walked behind him while Icestar and Lilypaw walked in the back. Icestar had rage and grief clouding her eyes. Lilypaw could sense that something had happened involving the fox. Lilypaw gathered the courage to ask her leader about the fox.
"Why are you so convinced that the fox is to blame? How do you know I didn't lure Owlpaw out and hurt her?" Lilypaw asked cautiously. Icestar looked at her with grief. The leader stopped walking and sighed. Snowbreeze looked back, but Icestar told her to keep walking. Icestar waited until the white she cat had disappeared into the snow covered forest. The leader sighed again then started talking.
"You would never hurt your family. Before you were born, I had a mate. His name was Mapletail. He went out hunting alone one night and he ran into a fox. Rainwhisker came back carrying Mapletail. His body was mangled and torn just like Mintfur." Lilypaw saw a tear slide down Icestar's cheek then fall on the frosty forest floor.
"He was dead Lilypaw." Icestar choked out. "The fox had no mercy. You are lucky to be alive Lilypaw. I can't say the same for Owlpaw her wounds are very severe, but you are lucky to have only escaped with a sprained leg." Icestar stood up on shaky legs and padded away as if their conversation had never happened. Lilypaw felt awful that she had survived and Owlpaw was hurt. She heard the fox bark and quickened her pace. She didn't want to feel those cruel, merciless claws ever again.

Chapter 15

Lilypaw walked into camp dragging her tail in the snow. She turned her head to look at Owlpaw's mangled body. Owlpaw was barely breathing. Rainstorm raced over to Owlpaw while Sunpaw, Olivepaw and Lionpaw ran to Lilypaw. The trio of toms tripped over each other trying to get details from Lilypaw. Littlefoot padded to the group and lead Lilypaw to the elders den, resting her tail tip on the apprentice's shoulder.
"Don't worry what Rainstorm and Grassheart are going to say. They are grieving. Owlpaw is their eldest kit and they won't want to loose her." Littlefoot looked past Lilypaw, her eyes distant. "When I was younger my mother, Duskfur, got mad at me for trying to get my brother to go hunting in ShadowClan territory." Littlefoot sighed. "She forgave me of course. She was just mad for a while."
Lilypaw yawned and wriggled around, trying to get comfortable. Littlefoot slid beside Lilypaw and started to lick the apprentice's ears until she fell asleep.

"All cats old enough to swim gather beneath the Tallstone for a clan meeting." Icestar's voice rang in Lilypaw's ears. Lilypaw jolted up and slowly padded into the clearing. The bright leaf-bare sun made her eyes water. Lilypaw sat outside the elders den with Littlefoot and Silverdust.
"I know that most of you have heard about what happened last night. I have gathered you all for a more exciting purpose though. Three of our kits have reached six moons. Adderkit step forward."
The large kit stepped forward his eyes glinting with excitement and hope. Lilypaw remembered feeling that same hope and excitement at her own ceremony.
"Brightcloud, you are young, but you have shown intelligence and strength. May you pass all you have learned from Berrysplash onto Adderpaw."
The silver warrior stepped forward and touched noses with Adderpaw. "I will be mentor to young Skypaw. I have learned a lot from my past mentor, Rowantail, and I will pass everything I learned from him onto Skypaw." The leader leaped down and

touched Skypaw's nose. She leaped back up and beckoned Echomist over. "Pixiepaw has showed interest in Echomist's medicine cat duties. So Echomist has agreed to mentor Pixiepaw. The Clan welcomes you three as apprentices of RiverClan." Icestar yowled into the rising sun. The Clan yowled the new apprentice's names. After the yowling died down Icestar started to speak again.
"Berrysplash, I want you to lead a patrol to check the ThunderClan border with Brightcloud, Snowbreeze and Adderpaw. Appleglow, you lead a hunting patrol at sunhigh. I will be joining along with Skypaw, Lionpaw and Duskflower. Silverdust, you take the Jasperheart and the remaining apprentices and check the WindClan border. Rainstorm, Grassheart, Lilypaw and Lionpaw come to the medicine den before doing your duties." Icestar leaped down and padded to the medicine den. Lilypaw followed behind Rainstorm. Icestar sat down beside Echomist who was behind Owlpaw.
"I have called you here as we are not sure Owlpaw will survive." Rainstorm let out a low wail and buried her nose in Grassheart's shoulder.
"So I am making her a warrior. I ask my warrior ancestors to look down on this apprentice. She has learned the warrior code and given up her life in service of her Clan. Let StarClan receive her as a warrior. She will be known as Owlheart in honour of her belief of what is right and her fierce protection of her family." Icestar stepped back and nodded to Rainstorm. The queen bent down to clean her kit's ruffled fur. At the touch of Rainstorm, Owlheart gave a small squeak and shivered. Grassheart touched his mate's cheek with his tail.
"She doesn't know it's you." Grassheart murmured. Rainstorm's shoulders slumped and she crept out of the den. Lilypaw turned to follow her, but Grassheart gave a low growl.
"Stay here. I'll get her, she won't want to see the cat that's behind her daughter's death." Grassheart snarled then left the den. Lionpaw sat down and started talking to Owlheart. He turned and looked at Lilypaw.
"Send in Sunpaw. He'll want to see Owlheart and hear her new name." Lilypaw nodded and stepped out of the den. She almost ran into Sunpaw on her way out.
"Can I go in now?" Sunpaw asked. Lilypaw nodded and Sunpaw rushed past her. She entered the den again and saw Sunpaw licking Owlheart's head. Owlheart didn't shrink away this time. Sunpaw

was murmuring to Owlheart.
"You will always be the bravest and most beautiful to me Owlheart. I love you and if you die tonight, I will meet you again in StarClan one day." Sunpaw curled up beside Owlheart and started to purr.
Icestar's fur brushed Lilypaw's.
"Let him sleep. I have a feeling they will be mates if she lives." Icestar purred. Lilypaw tried to purr, but it got stuck in her throat.
What about the prophecy? Owlheart can't love a cat that will kill someone!

Chapter 16

It had been three moons since Lilypaw had snuck out of camp. Owlheart was healing well, but Echomist was still worried about infection. Rainstorm went to the medicine den everyday. Sunpaw tried to visit Owlheart as much as he could. Lionpaw hadn't visited Owlheart since she was made a warrior. Lilypaw tried visiting, but Grassheart would growl at her every time she tried to see Owlheart. She only got to see Owlheart when she was asleep. Lilypaw was actually enjoying having Adderpaw and Skypaw in the den. Adderpaw was funny, but he was kind of arrogant. Skypaw on the other paw, was kind and intelligent.
Lilypaw woke up to Grayheart calling her from the den entrance. She got up and shook the moss from her pelt. She raced out of the den, accidentally stepping on Olivepaw's tail and waking him up. Grayheart was impatiently waiting in the clearing. He stood up when she crawled out of the small den entrance. *Was the den always that small?* She wondered.
"About time you woke up. We are doing battle training with Lionpaw today. Go wake up your brother." Grayheart ordered. She sighed then turned around to enter the den when Olivepaw crept out of the apprentices den. She stood face to face with him for a moment. She felt small beside him. Olivepaw was the size of a warrior and he looked like one too. His gray fur was sleek and well cared for. She could see his muscles rippling as he walked away. She shook her head and called for Lionpaw. Lionpaw groggily stumbled out of the den towards his mentor. Lilypaw held back a purr at the sight of her brother with moss stuck on his forehead. She walked over to him and flicked the moss off with her tail.
"Thanks." Lionpaw purred. She purred and then stopped. Even Lionpaw looked like a warrior. He was a little bit shorter than Olivepaw, but he looked just as strong. When he stood beside Appleglow he was the same size. She still had to look up to see Grayheart.
"Follow me." Appleglow whisked around and started for the camp entrance. As they walked through the trees Lilypaw took in the scents of new-leaf. She could smell honey and herbs. She looked

down and saw that she was walking all over a patch of marigold. She jumped out off the marigold and crashed into Grayheart.
"We'll pick it up on the way back." Grayheart purred in amusement. She nodded and continued walking down the narrow path to the training grounds. The group reached the clearing and Lionpaw went with Appleglow to one side and Lilypaw went with Grayheart to the other.
"Claws must be sheathed. Practice everything, but work on your belly raking." Grayheart quickly whispered. Lilypaw nodded and went to the centre of the clearing to meet Lionpaw.
"Start!" Appleglow yowled. Lionpaw instantly leaped at Lilypaw. He toppled her over, but she was ready. When he came over to her, still lying on the ground, she jumped up and slapped his paws out from under him. Lilypaw then slid under his belly and kicked up. Lionpaw jumped before she kicked him. He faced her and growled. Her eyes flashed and she saw the fox in front of her, snarling like a rabid beast. Without thinking she unsheathed her claws and slashed the fox's left eye. She heard a yowl of pain and shock. The yowl snapped her back to reality and she stared in horror what she had done. Lionpaw was lying on the ground with Appleglow pressing a paw on his left eye. Grayheart was furious.
"WHAT DID I TELL YOU! KEEP YOUR CLAWS SHEATHED! FIRST YOU HURT YOUR SISTER AND NOW YOUR BROTHER WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU!" Grayheart yowled. Lilypaw shrank down then ran back to camp with tears streaming down her face. She raced into camp and ran to the elders den. She needed comfort from Littlefoot. Littlefoot sat up when she saw Lilypaw.
"Why hello Lilypaw!" Littlefoot mewed happily. The elder saw the apprentices face and her friendly tone turned serious.
"What happened." Littlefoot asked.
"I unsheathed my claws in training and I slashed Lionpaw's eye." Lilypaw quickly said. Littlefoot shook her head.
"Just a trouble maker aren't you." Littlefoot mumbled. The elder sighed.
"I'll go get Pixiepaw. Echomist is out of camp." Littlefoot stood up.
"You stay here I don't want anymore trouble." Littlefoot ordered. Lilypaw couldn't just sit there so she crept behind Littlefoot. She stopped and ducked in a bush beside the leader's den. She heard four voices.
"I can't keep her under control. She has no respect for orders." She

recognized Grayheart's deep voice.
"She is still young. She will learn." Littlefoot argued.
"How many more cats will be hurt before she learns to listen." Grassheart snarled at Littlefoot.
"Grassheart! Calm yourself! This is your daughter we are talking about." Icestar growled.
"I wish she wasn't my daughter though." Grassheart growled.

Chapter 17

Lilypaw stepped back in shock at what she had just heard. She felt her eyes harden with rage. She barged into the den and started yowling at her father.
"IF YOU REALLY WISH THAT I WASN'T YOUR DAUGHTER THEN FINE! I DON'T WANT A USELESS FOX HEART FOR A FATHER!" She spat at the large tom with venom seeping out of her words.
Littlefoot and Grayheart stood frozen in shock. Grassheart had anger mixed with sadness clouding his amber eyes. Icestar stood up quickly and blocked Grassheart from Lilypaw.
"Move." Grassheart's voice was low and deadly. Icestar stood her ground.
"Move." Grassheart repeated louder. Icestar didn't move a muscle.
"Now Grassheart we both now that's not going to happen." Icestar mewed coolly. Grassheart hissed then pushed past the black she cat. He looked at Lilypaw with fire burning in his eyes. Lilypaw's anger vanished and a deep sorrow filled her from ears to tail. Her tail drooped and brushed the ground.
"Don't feel sorry for yourself. You did this yourself." Icestar didn't offer any sympathy. "Get out of my den. Tell your mother and Echomist I wish to speak with them." Lilypaw nodded and left the den with Grayheart and Littlefoot behind her. She told Rainstorm and Echomist then sat outside her den. Brightcloud came into camp and sent Adderpaw to the fresh kill pile. Brightcloud padded up to Lilypaw.
"What's wrong with you?" Brightcloud asked tilting her head.
Lilypaw sighed and told her friend the whole thing, starting with the fox attack.
"Wow. Does Grassheart know you didn't mean to hurt them?" Brightcloud gently asked. Lilypaw shook her head.
"I don't really want to talk with him right now." Lilypaw sighed and put her head on her paws. Brightcloud didn't like seeing Lilypaw like this.
"Well this might cheer you up, Duskflower has moved to the nursery expecting Grayheart's kits." Brightcloud mewed happily. Lilypaw just shrugged. Brightcloud looked disappointed.

"Well umm, I don't really know how to help you so I'll just leave you alone for now." Brightcloud turned away, but looked over her shoulder back at Lilypaw. Lilypaw saw worry and sadness in her silver friend's eyes. Lilypaw instantly felt guilty.
What is wrong with me? Kits are good news and Brightcloud loves telling me about kits.

Chapter 18

Lilypaw padded towards the apprentice den when she heard yowling coming from the nursery. She watched as Echomist and Pixiepaw ran into the reed den with herbs. It had been a moon since her argument with Grassheart. Lionpaw didn't seem to mind having a scar, he thought it was cool. Echomist had done everything she could, but she couldn't save his sight. She cringed as she heard Duskflower yowl in pain again. *Is having kits really that painful?* She walked to the nursery and stuck her head inside the den. Echomist was crouched over Duskflower and Pixiepaw was holding moss to Duskflower's head.
"Can I help?" Lilypaw mewed. Echomist didn't even look at her.
"Yes. Come here." Echomist was watching Duskflower's belly. "When the kits come your job is to lick them clean." Lilypaw nodded and waited. It wasn't long before the first kit was born. Lilypaw bent her head to nip the slimy birth sac, but Echomist beat her to it. She cleaned the small bundle, a black tabby tom. She set the kit beside it's mother. She repeated the licking process until the last kit was born, a very small white tom. She purred as Grayheart walked in and sat beside his mate. She looked at the kits with joy. There were three toms and two she-kits. The first she-kit was white with very pale silver swirls. The second was gray and white spotted. The toms were white, black and one was black and white. She watched as the new parents named the kits. Frostkit for the white she-kit, Featherkit for the gray and white she-kit and Cloudkit for the white tom. The black tabby kit was named Ravenkit and the black and white kit was named Reedkit. She purred again. Echomist turned to leave the den, but was shocked to see Lilypaw there.
"Oh it was you who helped. I thought it was Brightcloud." Echomist purred with amusement in her amber gaze. Lilypaw rolled her eyes and squeezed out of the den. She hopped to the apprentice den. Some of the warriors gave her weird looks. She tripped over her paws. Lilypaw tumbled across the clearing. She was about to stand up when she heard a voice behind her.
"What are doing?" She turned her head and saw Olivepaw with a strange expression. She quickly stood up and shook the dust off her

red fur.
"Well you know I was hopping from the nursery because I just helped Duskflower give birth to her kits and I was excited then I fell." Lilypaw mewed quickly. Olivepaw bent his head and took something off her head.
"You missed a piece of reed during your cleaning." She looked up at him and saw amusement and care in his eyes. She looked down at her paws for a second. When she looked back up at him his eyes were focused on something behind her. She looked back and when she did Olivepaw crashed on her. She flailed around trying to escape the fluffy tom. He laughed as she weakly slapped him with her paws. She remembered her training and went limp. She quickly remembered the last time she tried play fighting with someone and stopped. Olivepaw saw her stop playing and got off her.
"What's wrong? We were having fun." Olivepaw tilted his head in confusion. Lilypaw sighed.
"The last time I tried to play fight with someone Lionpaw got a scar." She looked at his paws. They were almost twice the size of her paws. Olivepaw whisked his tail under her chin forcing her to look at him.
"Hey. That wasn't your fault. That reminded you of the fox right? In that case you thought you were in danger and you fought for real. I would have done the same thing." Olivepaw mewed looking into her eyes.
"Thank you. I didn't know I needed some one to tell me that." Lilypaw mewed.
"If you ever need to talk about anything again just know you can talk to me Lilypaw." Olivepaw purred quietly. She nodded and stood up. She licked his cheek before turning to go to the apprentice den.

Chapter 19

Lilypaw woke up with a jolt and looked outside excitedly. She saw nothing but darkness. She sighed in disappointment. *Dawn won't ever get here.* Lilypaw rested her head on her paws. She wanted it to be morning so badly. Grayheart said that at dawn the older apprentices would be doing their warrior assessments. She let out a long breath.
"Great StarClan! You've been huffing like a badger all night!" Olivepaw hissed sleepily. Lilypaw squeaked in surprise. She thought that she was being quiet.
"Sorry." Lilypaw mewed. Olivepaw snorted and stood up. He shook out his fur.
"What are you doing? It's only Moonhigh." Lilypaw asked. She watched as the tom started for the den entrance.
"I won't be able to fall asleep again for a while so I'm going to practice for tomorrow." Olivepaw replied. Lilypaw's ear pricked. She had been wanting to perfect her skills.
"Can I come?" Lilypaw asked as she quickly stood up. Olivepaw looked back at her over his shoulder.
"Sure." He mewed "but you have to be quiet." Lilypaw nodded and carefully stepped over the sleeping cats. She peeked her head out of the den and saw Olivepaw talking with Snowbreeze and Berrysplash. She padded over to the three cats.
"We just want to go and practice for our assessment tomorrow." Olivepaw whispered. Berrysplash and Snowbreeze exchanged a knowing look that made Lilypaw's ears grow hot.
"Sure. Just be back before dawn. You will still need to rest." Snowbreeze murmured. Lilypaw started to walk beside Olivepaw in the direction of the river. She heard Berrysplash and Snowbreeze start talking behind them.
"Even Sunpaw and Owlheart hide their love better than those two." She heard Snowbreeze say in a hushed voice. Lilypaw felt her ears grow hot again. *I don't think we act like mates. He's like my brother.* She quickened her pace to keep up with Olivepaw. She broke into a run and ran ahead of Olivepaw. He started to run behind her. They reached the river quickly after they started running. They gasped in

shock when they saw the river. It was much lower than it should be especially in green-leaf. It had been very hot lately and it felt like the sun was going to burn her fur off.
"No use trying to get fish that's not there. Let's practice forest hunting." Lilypaw looked at Olivepaw. He nodded and crept towards the forest. Lilypaw went a different direction. They were hunting for a while when Lilypaw finally smelled a mouse. She instantly shrunk down and stealthily crept forward. She saw a furry little body nibbling on a nut. She leaped at the mouse. She landed on the prey and quickly nipped it's spine. She hid the mouse under a bramble bush. She was about to start hunting again when Olivepaw shrieked. She saw him out of the corner of her eye. She was about to turn when she felt claws grab her and pick her up off the ground. The ground was at least a tail length away from her.
"Lilypaw!" Olivepaw shrieked again. He leaped up and tried to grab the giant hawk. He caught it's leg with his claws and the bird screeched in pain. Olivepaw started clawing his way closer to the hawk's throat.
"Hold onto me!" Olivepaw yelled to Lilypaw. She dug her claws into the toms back. Olivepaw reached up and slashed the hawk's throat. It screeched and they started to fall. Lilypaw was still holding onto Olivepaw's back. They were about to hit the ground when Olivepaw jumped off the hawk. The hawk slammed against the ground. When Olivepaw jumped, he timed it so they wouldn't be injured by the impact. Lilypaw slid off the toms back.
"Are you ok? Does anything hurt? Did the hawks talons puncture your skin?" Olivepaw attacked her with questions. She caught her breath and prepared to answer the wave of questions.
"Yes. No. No." Lilypaw replied sarcastically. She saw Olivepaw roll his eyes.
"You need to be more careful. I... I mean the Clan can't afford to lose you." Olivepaw mewed seriously. Lilypaw saw that he truly did care and she felt her heart twist. *I don't want to hurt him, but he's only a friend to me.*

Chapter 20

"From this day forward you shall be known as Lilymist. We welcome you all as full warriors of RiverClan." Icestar yowled from her perch on the Tallstone. The Clan took up the yowling.
"Olivenose! Sunfrost! Lionscar! Lilymist!" The Clan yowled the new warriors names. Lilymist felt like she was about to burst with pride. She looked over to the medicine den and saw Owlheart laying there yowling her littermates names. Pixiepaw was with her yowling Lilymist's name. Lilymist frowned when she saw her parents. They were only yowling Olivenose, Sunfrost and Lionscar. She didn't care what her father did, but it hurt that Rainstorm wasn't celebrating her new name. She saw Grayheart approaching her and she sat up taller.
"Well done Lilymist!" The tom purred. Lilymist felt pride fill her at his praise. She knew Grayheart didn't give praise lightly.
"Happy to get rid of me?" She asked playfully. Grayheart shrugged then purred. Lilymist rolled her eyes. She excused herself and went to join the new warriors. Lionscar and Olivenose were talking and laughing.
"What's so funny?" She asked the toms. They laughed even harder and Lionscar fell on his back.
"The first thing Sunfrost did was go see Owlheart!" Olivenose gasped between laughs. She shook her head. It wasn't even that funny. *Toms will be toms.* She chuckled and walked over to talk to Brightcloud. She saw Sparrowleaf sitting with Jasperheart and went to ask where Brightcloud was.
"Lilymist! Congratulations!" Jasperheart purred. Sparrowleaf nodded to the new warrior.
"Thank you. Do you know where Brightcloud is?" She asked the two mates. Jasperheart shrugged.
"Probably helping Duskflower." Sparrowleaf nodded towards the nursery. Lilymist nodded her thanks and walked towards the nursery. She poked her head inside the tightly woven reed den.
"Attack!" Ravenkit shouted. She felt tiny claws on her face and she pulled her head back. She gently pulled the black tabby kit off her face. She rubbed her nose with her paw.

"Your name should be changed to Thornkit. You have sharp claws." She told Ravenkit. The small toms purrs shook his small body. He stood up and bounced back to Reedkit and Featherkit.
"I see you've already felt Ravenkit's claws." Brightcloud chuckled.
"He's going to make a great warrior." She nodded. Duskflower purred from behind Brightcloud. The queen stood up and walked to the two warriors. Frostkit followed her mother. Lilymist looked down at the small kit and smiled. The young she-kit was going to be a very beautiful cat. Her pale silver swirls got darker and her tail was rather fluffy. Frostkit was rather shy and reminded Lilymist of how Owlheart acted when she was younger.
"Congratulations Lilymist! Pass my praise onto the toms." Duskflower mewed. Frostkit leaped up and squealed. Duskflower turned around and hissed. Lilymist heard a frightened mew and looked over the black she cats shoulder. Cloudkit was crouched down, shaking. He had silver fur sticking out of the side of his mouth.
"StarClan knows how many times I've told you to stop pouncing on Frostkit's tail." Duskflower hissed. Cloudkit was stupid and spoke back.
"I was just trying to play. Featherkit, Reedkit and Ravenkit won't let me play with them." The young white tom argued. Duskflower reached out and slapped her son's ears.
"Don't talk back to me!" Duskflower quietly hissed. "Go play with someone else." Cloudkit quickly stood up and looked around. Lilymist watched him run over to Adderpaw.
"Can I play with you? Please!" Lilymist heard the kit squeak at the brown tom.
"Again. This is the third time in the past two days." Adderpaw sighed. Cloudkit was still desperate.
"Please! Duskflower did it again!" Cloudkit quietly wailed. Adderpaw's gaze hardened and he glared at Duskflower.
"Follow me." The apprentice mewed to Cloudkit. The white tom sighed in relief and followed Adderpaw behind the apprentice den. Lilymist turned back to Duskflower.
"Why would you do that? He's just a kit!" She gasped at the queen. Duskflower snorted and bent to sniff Frostkit.
"He shouldn't bully those smaller than him. Now if you don't mind I have to check on the other three." Duskflower mewed. Lilymist looked at Brightcloud.

"She makes it very obviously that she favours the other kits over Cloudkit." Lilymist mewed to the silver warrior.
"He needs to learn." Brightcloud mumbled. Lilymist saw that it bothered Brightcloud, but she didn't say anything. Lilymist walked away from the silver she cat. She padded over to the apprentice den and looked behind. Adderpaw was sitting there, examining Cloudkit's ears. They were speaking quietly, but loud enough for Lilymist to hear.
"It's not fair. I'm faster than the other kits, but Duskflower doesn't like me!" Cloudkit cried. Adderpaw didn't miss a beat.
"She's your mother of course she loves you. If she does this ever again tell me and I'll handle it." Adderpaw mewed seriously. "I'll be like your big brother, ok?" Cloudkit nodded and sniffed deeply. Lilymist was touched by Adderpaw's protection of Cloudkit. Adderpaw was a rather protective cat though. She almost squeaked when she heard someone yelling behind her.
"Lilymist! Get over here!" Silverdust yowled. Lionscar, Sunfrost and Olivenose were waiting beside Silverdust.
"Tonight you will be guarding the camp while we sleep. No talking to each other. Lionscar and Sunfrost will guard the dirt place entrance. Olivenose and Lilymist will guard the regular entrance. Dismissed." Silverdust stood up and walked back to the bracken den reserved for the deputy. Lilymist always admired and respected Silverdust. Silverdust had been a warrior before Icestar yet she didn't mind not being leader. Silverdust had a good life before becoming deputy. She had two kits, Rainwhisker and Grayheart. Lilymist walked to the entrance with her partner. The air was getting cool which was a relief. The air during the day was humid and dry. Lilymist stood across from Olivenose and looked up at Silverpelt, which was starting to appear in the darkening sky. She felt a breeze start to swish around. "Have I made you proud Mintfur?" Lilymist whispered quietly.

Chapter 21

[image]

The dawn air was warm and welcoming. Lilymist wanted to curl up and sleep forever. The only reason she hadn't fallen asleep yet is that her vigil partner sneezed more than he breathed. Olivenose was starting to get on Lilymist's nerves. She almost yowled in joy when Silverdust woke up. She watched excitedly as the ginger patched she cat padded towards them. Silverdust was about to speak when a loud honking came from behind Lilymist. She turned and saw Olivenose staring in disgust and pain at a slimy feather laying on the ground.
"You are dismissed from guard duty. Olivenose go to Echomist and get that nose checked out." Silverdust nodded at the gray tom who was now rubbing his nose with his paw. A small line of blood was smeared just below his right nostril.
"Yes Silverdust." Olivenose meowed. Lilymist watched as he sniffed then walked to the medicine den. She thanked Silverdust then went to go tell Lionscar and Sunfrost they didn't have to guard. She saw Sunfrost jab his paw into Lionscar's side and her brother snapped his head up.
"Were you asleep?" Lilymist asked the red tom. Lionscar looked at her guilty then slowly nodded. Sunfrost chuckled softly. Lilymist rolled her eyes then turned around.
"You won't tell will you?" Lionscar asked, desperation creeping into his voice.
"No, but you should work on that guilty look of yours it gave you away." Lilymist said over her shoulder. She walked away feeling amused. She wasn't even tired, but she knew it would hit her later.
"Lilymist!" She heard a squeaky voice. She turned around and saw Pixiepaw running towards her.
"Echomist said I can choose a warrior to go herb picking with. Will you go herb picking with me?" Pixiepaw mewed excitedly. Lilymist purred and nodded. Pixiepaw squealed and leapt up. Lilymist started laughing at the apprentice.
"Lead the way." Lilymist flicked Pixiepaw with her tail. The two started walking into the trees. They were herb gathering near the

ThunderClan border.
"How are you liking your medicine cat training?" Lilymist asked.
"It's really fascinating and I'm learning a lot, but it's hard." Pixiepaw answered then pointed her chin towards the dip in the ground ahead of them. "That's where we are herb picking."
"What are we picking?" Lilymist asked.
"Juniper berries, marigold and tansy." Pixiepaw eagerly replied.
Lilymist nodded and decided to quiz her.
"What do they do?" Lilymist asked Pixiepaw. Pixiepaw tilted her head to the side and squinted.
"Juniper berries are for belly aches. Marigold is for treating infections and I'm not sure what tansy does." Pixiepaw mewed.
Lilymist nodded impressed by the apprentice's knowledge.
"I'm not sure what tansy does either." Lilymist purred. Pixiepaw giggled.
"You're a warrior you don't need to know this stuff!" Pixiepaw purred. The white she cat then ran to a bush with blue berries on it. Pixiepaw concentrated hard not to slice the berries with her claws. Lilymist bent her head forward to grab the bush. Her ears pricked up as she heard a twig snap behind them. Pixiepaw didn't hear the snap and was still carefully picking the blue berries off the prickly green bush. Lilymist turned around and crept towards the noise. It came from the ThunderClan border. She peeked her head through the grass and squinted. She saw a strong looking red tom creeping through the grass on the ThunderClan border towards a silver she cat. Lilymist watched in shock as she realized that the cats were Foxbelly of ThunderClan and Brightcloud of RiverClan! She was about to yowl a warning to Brightcloud when the she cat spun around and started play fighting with Foxbelly. Lilymist felt her mouth fall open at the sight of the two cats. She tried moving backwards, but she stepped on a twig. The snap alerted Foxbelly and Brightcloud and they started running side by side deeper into the forest. Lilymist sat up and almost leaped in shock at a voice behind her.
"Lilymist! It cures coughs!" Pixiepaw squeaked behind her. She looked at Pixiepaw confused.
"What?" Lilymist had no idea what Pixiepaw was talking about.
"I remembered what tansy does! It cures coughs!"

Chapter 22

Two moons had passed since Lilymist went herb gathering with Pixiepaw. She never confronted Brightcloud about Foxbelly as she didn't really care and it was none of her business. What she did care about was that Brightcloud moved to the nursery expecting what everyone assumed to be Rainwhisker's kits. Adderpaw was given to Grassheart to train in replacement of Brightcloud.

Lilymist sighed and stood up. She panted and flicked her tail irritably. The heat only seemed to get worse and it was so humid. Duskflower, Grayheart and all her kits except Cloudkit had gone to go swimming in the creek. Cloudkit was watching Adderpaw practice his battle moves with Skypaw. She walked over to the fresh kill pile and chose a large pike. *Littlefoot's favourite.* She picked up the fish and carried to the elders den. She meowed to let Littlefoot know she was there.
"I was beginning to wonder when you were going to visit me again." Littlefoot purred. Lilymist dropped the fish at Littlefoot's paws.
"Did you catch that?" Littlefoot asked as she tore a chunk out of the fish. Lilymist shook her head.
"Skypaw caught it." Lilymist replied. She sat down and curled her paws under her belly.
"That cat is turning out to be an amazing hunter." Littlefoot purred.
Lilymist turned her head as she heard reeds crunch. Pixiepaw stood there with her nose wrinkled in disgust. Lilymist saw that she had mouse bile.
"Well I'll visit you later." Lilymist stood up and shook the bits of moss from her fur. She padded out of the den and looked up. She saw dark clouds gathering overhead. The sun was still burning down despite the clouds. Lilymist sat down in front of the nursery and started sunning. She was sunning for a while when she felt a gust of wind and the sun suddenly disappeared. Rain started thundering on the ground and the sky was lit up with a bolt of pale blue lightning. Lilymist's tail puffed out and she ran to the nearest den. She got inside then heard a yowl of fear and pain. Echomist was laying beside Brightcloud. Brightcloud was crunching a stick in

her strong jaws. The silver tabby let out a painful cry, but it was drowned out by the rumble of thunder. Echomist was working quickly, but shakily.
"Lilymist! Thank StarClan! I need your help." Echomist yowled over the wind and thunder. Lilymist crouched over the queen and waited. She heard hail starting to pound on the ground. Brightcloud yowled and crunched the stick. Splinters fell on the ground. Lilymist saw the first kit coming and got ready. She caught the kit and started cleaning it after breaking the birth sac. She placed the little kit beside it's mother. The small kit was mewling and started wiggling towards Brightcloud. Brightcloud's pain eased as two other kits were born. The storm stopped as quickly as it came. Lilymist cleaned the last kit then looked outside. There was mud everywhere and Cloudkit was huddling in fear under Adderpaw's belly. Skypaw was with Pixiepaw comforting Littlefoot. Lilymist looked back at Brightcloud then went to get Rainwhisker. She got the gray tom then returned to the nursery. Rainwhisker ran ahead of her, but stopped to talk with Echomist. Lilymist paused to listen to Echomist's hushed mumbling.
"...kit not normal. It's a beast." The medicine cat quickly whispered. Lilymist cautiously walked into the nursery after Rainwhisker she heard a gasp. She looked at the kits. They were all gray except for a large silver tom. The smallest kit raised its head and let out a pitiful mew. Lilymist froze when she saw the kits face. The she kits face was horrifying. It's nose was crooked and its left eye was huge and raised higher than the right eye. It's right leg ended at the kits knee and there was a knob at the end. Brightcloud had put the kit far away from the toms.
"We should still name it." Brightcloud murmured. The kit was not a he nor a she, but an it that wiggled and mewed.
"Yes my love. We should name the pure ones after the storm." Rainwhisker meowed. Lilymist felt grief seething out of Rainwhisker, but he could not show grief, for that would make Brightcloud feel horrible. Brightcloud nodded and flicked the gray one with her tail. "This one will be Stormkit and the silver one is Hailkit." Brightcloud pulled them closer as if she was afraid they would catch their sister's ugliness. Brightcloud looked up at Lilymist with grief in her eyes.
"Can you please find Snowbreeze." Brightcloud mumbled. Lilymist nodded and leaned forward to lick Brightcloud's forehead. She

turned and left the den. Silverdust stood outside her den and looked around the camp. Lilymist padded towards Silverdust with her head hanging and her tail dragging in the mud.
"What's wrong?" Silverdust asked.
"One of Brightcloud's kits is... Unnatural." Lilymist chose her words carefully. This only confused Silverdust.
"How so?" The ginger patched she cat asked with worry creeping into her voice. She described the deformed kit to the deputy.
"Great StarClan!" Silverdust shivered and the fur along her spine stood straight up.
"Brightcloud wants Snowbreeze. Do you know where she is?" Lilymist asked.
"I sent her on a patrol near the WindClan border with Swanshine, Grassheart and Sunfrost. They should be back soon. We must report this to Icestar. Follow me." Silverdust mumbled. Lilymist followed Silverdust to Icestar's den.
"Enter." Icestar meowed when they announced they were there.
"Lilymist has something to report about Brightcloud's kits." Silverdust shakily meowed.
"Go on." Icestar sensed the she cat's worry and fear.
"Brightcloud had a deformed kit. It's left eye is large and raised higher than the other eye. It's nose is crooked and its right leg ends with a knob at the knee." Lilymist meowed seriously. The leader's eyes widened in fear. Icestar tried to remain calm for the sake of Lilymist and Silverdust.
"Who all knows about this kit?" Icestar asked, her eyes hardening.
"Brightcloud, Rainwhisker, Echomist, Silverdust, you and I." Lilymist responded.
"I want to see this...kit if that is what we call it." Icestar stood up and headed for the nursery. Lilymist followed behind with Silverdust. Echomist was already there.
"Brightcloud, I'm sorry about this, but no one must know about your kit. We must get rid of it or the Clan will think that the kit is a sign from StarClan." Icestar meowed softly, trying to soothe the queen. Brightcloud quickly pushed the kit away. The silver queen curled her tail around Hailkit and Stormkit and pulled them closer to her chest.
"Please take it away." Brightcloud begged. Icestar nodded and picked up the kit.
"Does it have a name?" Silverdust asked. Rainwhisker and

Brightcloud looked at each other. Rainwhisker tried speaking, but his voice cracked. He cleared his throat and tried again.
"It's name is Cursedkit."

Chapter 23

"Help! Someone help me!" Lilymist heard a desperate yowl behind her.
"Quick! Rainwhisker take it to the fox area!" Icestar hissed. Rainwhisker took the small kit in his jaws and wrinkled his nose as if he was carrying mouse bile. Icestar, Echomist and Lilymist exited the nursery and ran to the queen desperately yowling in the middle of camp. Lilymist skidded to a stop, spraying mud on Duskflower. The black queen didn't notice.
"We were swimming in the creek and the storm came. The hail came and a huge piece hit him on the head he hasn't woken up yet!" Duskflower wailed. Grayheart was comforting Featherkit and Reedkit. Frostkit was trying to wake Ravenkit. The black tom lay unmoving on the wet ground. He opened his eyes a little bit, just enough to see pale yellow flick around before groaning and closing his eyes again.
"Hush my son. It will be okay. Please trust me, wake up!" Duskflower sobbed. Ravenkit flinched at the sound of his mother's voice. He opened his tiny mouth to speak.
"I believe you." Ravenkit croaked. He groaned then shut his eyes. His tail twitched then his small, wet body was still. Duskflower raised her chin to the sky.
"No! Give him back! Give me back my son!" Duskflower yowled in grief to the sky. Lilymist couldn't listen anymore. She folded her ears down and closed her eyes. She felt a jab at her leg. She opened her eyes and looked down. Cloudkit looked confused.
"What happened? Why is Ravenkit sleeping in the mud? The moss is much more comfortable." Cloudkit asked.
"He's dead." Duskflower answered for Lilymist. "If you were here you would have known. Where were you!" Duskflower yowled at the white kit. This time Cloudkit didn't cower like he had before. He stepped forward and raised his chin.
"I was with Adderpaw. He has treated me like a little brother. He has showed me love when you have not. I feel no grief for Ravenkit, as he treated me like a vermin, as if my life was worth no more than a bug." Cloudkit hissed at his mother. Duskflower raised her

paw with her claws unsheathed to swat her son. Duskflower was knocked over by Adderpaw just as she was about to strike. Adderpaw was furious and he let her know it.
"You ungrateful fox heart! You deserve for everyone you love to die! You are a worthless rat and a horrible mother!" Adderpaw snarled at the queen with enough venom to make an adder recoil. Duskflower cowered down, but she tried to speak.
"Don't even speak you pathetic piece of Twoleg trash. You have rejected me and treated me like dung. I am now going to see if Brightcloud will take me in." Cloudkit said with a cold that would make leaf bare come early.
"Enough! Listen to yourselves! Duskflower I have noticed that you are a bad mother, but you are a first time mother with four kits. Seriously though handle yourself!" Icestar roared. Lilymist turned and ran into the forest.

Chapter 24

Lilymist ran out the main entrance and almost crashed into Sunfrost. He was soaking wet and looked concerned. Before he could ask she ran towards the river. *Oh my beautiful river.* She zig zagged through the trees, spraying mud everywhere. She stopped at the riverbed. She looked at her river. Reeds and fluffy tips grew out of the smooth stones surrounding the river. Beautiful fish swam through once a year and this was one of those times. Lilymist looked down into the deep water and saw fish with scales that shimmered and seemed to twinkle. The fish scales looked like stars when the fish were quickly swimming through the clear water. "That's what I'll call these fish. Star scales." Lilymist murmured. She would have already tried to catch some, but they were poisonous and would kill a cat within a day. No herb could heal the venom that ran through the fish's veins. Lilymist enjoyed watched the fish swim. It seemed like they had a pattern of traveling. The larger fish surrounded the small fish in what Lilymist had heard Rowantail, when he was still alive, call a pack. She thought back on all the things Rowantail had told her. He was once a loner traveling from far away so he always had stories to tell about different places. He had said that he had once seen a Clan of wolves. He had eventually found what to call them after a moon. He called them the Pack of the Pointed Hills. They worked very differently than warriors. The largest wolves nipped and bit at the small weak ones. He had said he specifically noticed than all the wolves respected and feared one specific wolf, a silver male with green eyes. The wolf had a mate, a beautiful brindled brown she wolf with deep brown eyes. They were gorgeous he had said. He observed the wolves for a moon and he especially loved watching them hunt. They would gather together to hunt a moose or deer with so much beauty, grace and agility. They had seemed to run faster than any LeopardClan warrior could. What she missed most about Rowantail were his stories, filled with so much detail you felt like you were living it yourself. She heard sloshing and the sound snapped her back to reality. She looked back down at the fish again one more time then spun around. She was greeted by a grief stricken Grayheart. She let her hackles lie flat and

stepped towards the white warrior.
"Don't comfort me. I'm here for the same reason you are. I wish to watch the fish." Grayheart's sorrow filled voice rumbled. Lilymist nodded and touched her tail to his shoulder before leaving him alone to grieve for his lost son. She walked through the forest for a while then returned back to camp. Everyone was calm, but Lilymist noticed Duskflower slumped near the elders den. She kept looking at the nursery as if she expected Ravenkit to burst out any minute. Lilymist felt pity wash over her and went to talk with the queen.
"How are you doing?" Lilymist asked. Duskflower looked at the warrior with grief clouding her beautiful yellow eyes.
"It's my fault." Duskflower whispered.
"Ravenkit didn't die because of you." Lilymist soothed running her tail up and down the queen's back.
"Not Ravenkit, Cloudkit!" Duskflower wailed. "I tried to be a good mother! I really did. He was weaker than the others and I didn't pay enough attention to him!" Duskflower sobbed. Lilymist was astonished. She was grieving for her living son rather than her dead one.
"Cloudkit was just upset. He didn't mean what he said." Lilymist whispered.
"I deserve it. I never treated him fairly. I only saw his faults." Duskflower unsheathed her claws. She started clawing one of her paws without realizing it. Her paw was a bloody mess by the time she noticed. Lilymist helped her up and lead her to the medicine den. She left her in the paws of Echomist. Owlheart walked towards Lilymist as she was leaving the den. Lilymist smiled. She hadn't seen her sister walk for a long time. Her stride was wobbly and shaky, but Owlheart raised her chin in pride. Lilymist suddenly got a brilliant idea and padded towards Icestar's den.
"Icestar? May I enter?" She asked.
"Enter." Icestar's voice seemed to lose the spark it always had in it. Lilymist stepped inside the den and sat down.
"I had an idea. What if we made patrols for elders, long term medicine patients, queens and medicine cats." Lilymist asked excitedly. Icestar's ears pricked up.
"I think that a good idea, but not right now. The queens are grieving and Owlheart is just now relearning how to walk." Lilymist felt a bubble burst inside her heart.
"That's exactly why we should do it. To help everyone heal and

teach the medicine cats what warriors learn. I'm sure Littlefoot would like to be running through the forest beside her Clanmates again too." Lilymist argued. Icestar stood up and yawned.
"I'll think about it, but I have more important duties to attend to. I'm calling a meeting make sure you are there." Icestar leaped onto the Tallstone as she said that.
"All cats old enough to swim gather beneath the Tallstone for a Clan meeting!" The Clan gathered around quickly.
"I have spoken with Silverdust and she says she wishes to retire. I have approved her request as she was a young warrior when I was born." Icestar looked around at her Clan as they cheered for Silverdust. Lilymist looked over at the deputy and saw that she was getting white fur on her muzzle. She looked up as Icestar spoke again.
"The new deputy of RiverClan will be Grassheart. He has stood by my side for many moons and I feel that after I pass he will be a great leader." Icestar yowled. Lilymist cheered with her Clanmates and she truly felt proud of Grassheart. After the ceremony she walked towards the large warrior to congratulate him. She saw his eyes brighten a little bit.
"Congratulations Grassheart. You deserve this." She told him with pride. He narrowed his eyes at her. Lilymist held her breath when he was about to speak.
"Thank you Lilymist." Then he was taken away by the senior warriors to show him his new den. Lilymist felt a small claw shred her heart at his cold tone. *Why did I ever do that?*

Chapter 25

Lilymist sat in the middle of the camp clearing, her chin raised in pride. Duskflower's kits had been apprenticed and Icestar chose the newest warriors to be their mentors. Olivenose got Reedpaw, Lionscar got Featherpaw, Sunfrost got Frostpaw and Lilymist was to be mentoring Cloudpaw. She was excited to be a mentor, but didn't know where to start. She looked around the clearing and saw the rest of the new mentors leaving with their apprentices.
"Lilymist? Can we go with them?" Cloudpaw asked curiously.
Lilymist nodded and the white tom sprinted to catch up with the other cats. She shook her head and ran after him. *He should have been given to Snowbreeze. She would be able to keep up with him.*
Lilymist caught up with the group and started walking beside Sunfrost. Lionscar and Olivenose walked up front while the four apprentices walked in between the warriors. She noticed Sunfrost watching Frostpaw very carefully.
"Why are you looking at her like a piece of prey?" Lilymist asked the golden tom. He looked at her then chuckled and returned his gaze to his apprentice.
"She doesn't seem to have any strength unlike her littermates. She seems weak out here, it's as if she's only strong near Duskflower." Sunfrost meowed not taking his eyes off Frostpaw. "When we get back to camp you should go talk to Owlheart. I think she's ready to move back to the warriors den. She wants you to help her make a nest." Sunfrost purred. He seemed really happy about her moving to the den. He was not Owlheart's mate though. They reached the river after showing the apprentices the border and they all seemed to like the seemingly bottomless river. They showed them the rest of the borders then started the walk home.
Once they returned to camp it was starting to get dark and Silverpelt started to appear. Lilymist walked over to the medicine den to talk with Owlheart. She poked her head into the den and Owlheart leaped up, her eyes shining. Echomist's eyes were dull and filled with sadness. Lilymist thought that Echomist was just going to miss Owlheart's company.
"I am healed enough to continue the plan, right?" Owlheart

whispered to Echomist. The medicine cat looked at Lilymist then back at Owlheart and slowly nodded. Owlheart purred and lead Lilymist out of the medicine den.
"Why are we going to the nursery?" Lilymist asked her sister.
Owlheart didn't reply, but just stepped inside the nursery. She sat in a nest and purred.
"I'm expecting kits!" She mewed unable to hide her excitement.
Lilymist looked at her in horror and tried to act excited.
"That's the same look Echomist got. Is there something wrong?" Owlheart asked, looking sad and worried.
"Your injuries. They won't stop you from having kits..." Lilymist trailed off and stared at her sister in grief.
"What will happen Lilymist?" Owlheart asked, her voice starting to tremble.
"The birth will kill you Owlheart. I'm sorry." Lilymist started sobbing and pressed her nose to Owlheart's shaking body. "I'm so sorry."
Owlheart pulled away and sniffled.
"Sunfrost was so happy. He was going to be a father. He wanted to raise our kits together." Owlheart started sobbing too and buried her nose in Lilymist's fur. *It's all my fault. Why did I ever think I could kill a fox? How stupid am I. Very.*

Chapter 26

Lilymist paced back and forth in the clearing. She circled around Sunfrost for most likely the millionth time. She flinched as she heard Owlheart's pained yowl. Sunfrost tried running into Grassheart. The deputy was guarding the nursery entrance so no one could disturb Owlheart. The silver she cat had started kitting at dawn. The moon was starting to rise when she finished and Sunfrost raced into the nursery. Lilymist pushed past Grassheart and ran in after Sunfrost. She watched as Owlheart and Sunfrost licked and nuzzled their three kits. Lilymist felt her heart twist at the sight of the new parents.
"What do you want to name them?" Sunfrost asked. Owlheart paused for a second.
"The brown she cat should be Lichenkit." Owlheart licked her daughter's head. The kit was a golden brown tabby she cat. Sunfrost nodded and pointed to the silver kit with his tail.
"Moonkit. What do you think?" Owlheart softly purred.
"It's beautiful. We should name the tom Tigerkit. He needs all the strength he can get." Sunfrost gazed fondly at his son. The tom kit was tiny and it looked like he struggled to even drink milk. Owlheart winced in pain and whimpered. Sunfrost instantly checked her over.
"Don't worry. I have hope. I'll live." Owlheart wheezed. Sunfrost sat next to her and curled his tail around hers. Lilymist turned and exited the nursery. She walked to the centre of camp and lay down, facing the nursery. She wanted to watch for any news of Owlheart. She closed her eyes for a second or two.

"Owlheart! Echomist! She won't wake up! Tigerkit!" Sunfrost's grief stricken yowl echoed around camp. Lilymist jumped up and ran to the nursery. Swanshine was sitting there, her head bowed and her tail on Sunfrost's shoulder. Lilymist sat beside the grieving tom and watched as Echomist came in with Pixiepaw and took Owlheart's body out of the nursery. Pixiepaw dragged Tigerkit into the clearing and set him down beside his mother's body. Lichenkit and Moonkit squirmed and mewled in protest until Brightcloud put them in her

nest. Lilymist stared blankly at the two remaining kits. She felt a surge of protectiveness towards her nieces. Lilymist stepped forward and nudged the kits. Brightcloud pushed them into Owlheart's nest and sat with her kits. Lilymist sat down beside Owlheart's kits and curled her tail around them. She sat there until sunhigh protecting her sister's kits. Lichenkit and Moonkit got hungry so she passed them over to Brightcloud. Lilymist stood up and stretched. She yawned and walked outside towards Owlheart's limp body. The first snow of the season was starting to fall. It melted on the ground, but where it fell on Owlheart and Tigerkit it stayed. Grassheart sat beside Owlheart, his head bowed in grief. Sunfrost was sitting in front of the medicine den sleeping. She sat down beside Grassheart and bent to lick Tigerkit.
"I'm sorry Owlheart. If I had been faster you would be sleeping with your kits and Sunfrost. I'm sorry." Grassheart mumbled. The deputy stood up and dipped his head to the body of his daughter. He then lay back down, but kept his hind legs still in standing position. Lilymist gasped. That was a very old posture of respect, honour and submission. It was only used when a leader lost their final life or a medicine cat died or retired. It was never used to mourn. Grassheart stood up with grief clouding his eyes.
"May your journey to StarClan be quick and peaceful." Grassheart choked out then turned and walked to his den with his tail dragging in the lightly falling snow. Lilymist looked back at her sister. The snow was slowly starting to cover her fur. For some reason that angered Lilymist and she sat with her body curled around Owlheart and Tigerkit. She lay there regretful and full of grief until she fell into a dreamless sleep.

Chapter 27

The vigil was long and cold. Grassheart, Lionscar, Sunfrost and Silverdust had buried the dead queen. Lilymist sat beside her mother, numb with grief. She watched as Grassheart helped Lionscar lower Owlheart into the deep hole that would be where she rested until the end of time. Sunfrost dragged his paws as he placed his only son beside Owlheart's body. Lilymist looked into the hole. It looked as if Owlheart were sleeping with Tigerkit curled safely beside her belly. The whole Clan had gathered and were behind the ones closest to Owlheart. Lilymist sat as her Clanmates came up and each of them kicked dirt into the grave as a final sign of respect and grief. Even Hailkit and Stormkit had been dragged from the nursery. The small toms kicked a tiny bit of dirt then looked back at Brightcloud. They looked into the hole in curiosity then horror at seeing the two cats under the dirt.
"Brightcloud! There's cats sleeping in there!" Stormkit squeaked in shock at his mother. Brightcloud stiffened as Grassheart leaped across the hole in anger.
"She is not sleeping. She's dead you pathetic fishbrain." Grassheart snarled at the toms, who were shaking. Rainwhisker ran towards his sons and pushed them aside. He mumbled an apology to Grassheart and the deputy's fur began to lie flat. Grassheart turned and walked to his den. Lilymist noticed that he looked utterly defeated and like an elder. Rainstorm ran after him and lead him to his den with her tail on his shoulder. Lilymist looked back at her sister's grave, which was now almost filled. Sunfrost stood up beside her and went to the fresh kill pile. He picked up a trout and walked back to the grave. He dug a small hole and placed the fish in it.
"Trout was her favourite." Sunfrost explained with happy memories momentarily lighting his eyes. After the burial was over, everyone went to their own dens, except for Lilymist and Sunfrost. They walked to the nursery to watch Lichenkit and Moonkit as they slept. They sat side by side in silence until the first rays of dawn appeared on the horizon. Brightcloud woke to find them staring intently at Lichenkit and Moonkit. She reached a paw out and scooped the kits up and put them in front of the two cats. Lilymist sat down and

curled her body around the kits. *Do they even remember Owlheart's scent?* They were so little that they would think Brightcloud was their true mother. She looked like she could be their mother. Brightcloud and Owlheart were both silver tabbies. The kits would feel like their true family was Rainwhisker, Brightcloud, Hailkit and Stormkit. *They must know who their parents are.* Lilymist stood up and gently shook the kits off. She brushed past Sunfrost and walked towards Icestar's den. She meowed to let her leader know she was there.
"Enter." Icestar softly meowed. Lilymist stepped into the den and dipped her was to Icestar. She noticed Echomist and Grassheart sitting in front of the leader. They both looked at her as she sat down.
"May I move my nest into the nursery?" She nervously asked. All three cats looked at her in surprise. Grassheart spoke first.
"You're expecting kits?" He gasped. She quickly shook her head.
"No. I want to be with Owlheart's kits. Her death was my fault and I feel that I must take care of her kits." Lilymist explained. Echomist and Grassheart crouched, talking in hushed voices with Icestar. They rose their heads after a moment and looked at Lilymist.
"The nursery is made for those nursing and expecting kits. Since you are not expecting kits, we have declined your request." Icestar meowed calmly. Lilymist stood up and headed for the entrance.
"I haven't dismissed you yet Lilymist. I will be giving Cloudpaw to Snowbreeze until you are healed enough to train an apprentice properly. Tell Sunfrost I am giving Frostpaw to Sparrowleaf." Icestar said seriously.
"I am also taking your request to make an elder, medicine cat and queen patrol. I have decided that those will take place once a moon. The first one will be tomorrow!" Icestar said excitedly. Lilymist grunted.
"That's great." She meowed, her voice dull and miserable. Icestar flicked her tail, dismissing Lilymist.
"Go to Pixiepaw for poppy seeds. They will dull the pain." Echomist called after her. Lilymist turned in the direction of the medicine den.
"Echomist wants you to give me poppy seeds." She explained. Pixiepaw nodded then disappeared behind a wall of hanging ivy then returned a second later with poppy seeds. She rolled two on the ground and Lilymist bent her head to lick them. She swallowed

them then sat in a nest. She rested her head on her paws and sighed.
"You miss her, don't you?" Pixiepaw asked. Lilymist turned her head to look at the pretty, young apprentice.
"Don't you miss Rosie?" Lilymist replied. "What are you making?"
Pixiepaw looked at her and smiled.
"Some herbs for Brightcloud. It is borage leaves covered in honey. The honey makes them taste better and it will give her energy. Borage helps her milk come easier." Pixiepaw mewed looking back at the leaf wrap she made. The apprentice picked it up and headed for the medicine den entrance. She put the herbs down and licked Lilymist's forehead.
"Have a good sleep. You'll feel better when you wake up." Pixiepaw soothed then exited the den. Lilymist closed her eyes slowly and suddenly smelled Owlheart, as if the queen was grooming Lilymist.
"Don't grieve too hard for me, I left you kits to care for. They were my final gift to the Clan." Owlheart's voice seemed to whisper in her ears. Lilymist purred and started to fall asleep.

Chapter 28

Lilymist raised her head and blinked, holding back a snarl. "Stupid birds ruined my sleep." She growled. She heard a giggle behind her.
"You sound like an elder." Pixiepaw purred. Lilymist couldn't help but purr at Pixiepaw. She helped the small apprentice tidy up the den then walked outside. It was almost sunhigh and Grassheart was ordering patrols for the rest of the day.
"About time you woke up!" Grassheart scolded. "While your Clanmates were out in the cold forest hunting, you were curled in a warm den." Lilymist shrank in her pelt. She had expected Grassheart to be more forgiving than that.
"Sorry. I'll go out hunting as soon as I can." She mumbled not meeting Grassheart's gaze.
"Good. There is a patrol about to leave. Jasperheart, Icestar, Skypaw and Adderpaw are waiting for you." Grassheart's deep voice rumbled.
"Yes Grassheart." Lilymist mumbled. She slowly walked over to the entrance then saw the patrol leaving. She tried running after them, but she stumbled and fell in the snow. The patrol stopped and Adderpaw looked at her in amusement, his whiskers twitching.
"Shut up Adderpaw. If you fell I wouldn't laugh at you." Lilymist hissed. Icestar stepped in front of the apprentice.
"Control your emotions Lilymist." Icestar warned. Lilymist dipped her head and walked ahead of the group. She scented a crow and wrinkled her nose. She could already taste the sour flesh. She dropped into a crouch and started creeping forward. She was about to leap when her leg gave out and she yowled in pain. The bird heard this and flew off. She didn't try going after it, she didn't seem to have the energy. She could hear Skypaw giggling quietly behind her. She spun around full of a sudden anger.
"Don't laugh at me. As if you could catch that, remember who the apprentice here is." She growled, her voice deadly soft. Skypaw cowered in fear below her. She gained a sudden conscience and padded away from the apprentice. She walked back to camp. She saw Olivenose's eyes light up as she walked towards him. *Don't get*

your hopes up, useless tom. She padded right up to him and heard him purr softly. He tried play fighting with her, but she just swatted his ear.
"You're blocking the nursery." She meowed coldly. The spark in his eyes disappeared and he shuffled awkwardly out of the way. She pushed her way in and her gaze softened as she saw the kits. Sunfrost was sitting there, watching his kits. She saw them wiggle and squirm around Brightcloud.
"They opened their eyes. They are still blue for now though." Sunfrost meowed proudly. She leaned down and lapped at the kits heads. She sat up purring. She turned out the nursery and walked out the den entrance.
"Lilymist! My den! NOW!" Icestar's yowl rang in her ear. She nervously padded to the den. Icestar's eyes were blazing in anger.
"Skypaw said you tried attacking her." Icestar growled. Lilymist shuffled her paws and nodded slowly.
"I didn't attack her I just..." Her response was drowned out by Icestar's angry yowl.
"I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU WERE DOING! Control yourself." Icestar snarled. The last part was whispered, as if she was talking to herself. "How am I supposed to know if you won't do it again? What if you decide to attack Hailkit or Stormkit? I am confining you to the elders den until you control yourself." Icestar coldly hissed. Lilymist stood up and walked to the entrance. She paused and turned her head.
"I can't believe I'm related to you." She hissed. Icestar stood up and walked to the warrior. Without warning she raked her claws along Lilymist's flank. Lilymist yowled in pain. Icestar leaned closer to Lilymist and whispered in her ear.
"You always have to get the last word in don't you? You are now confined to the forest. The only time you are allowed back is for herbs or to bring prey back." Icestar snarled. Lilymist had never seen this side of Icestar before. Rainstorm ran into the den her fur bushed up in anger. She must have been listening from outside the den.
"You have no right to do that. She will be confined to the elders den. That is enough punishment." Rainstorm hissed. Icestar's eyes flashed then went back to normal.
"Very well. Rainstorm you will be punished for interference. You will be doing apprentice duties for a half moon and you have just

lost your senior warrior title. Lilymist you will be confined to the elders den for that half moon. Dismissed." Icestar sat down in her nest with her back facing the two shocked she cats. Rainstorm's tail drooped as she walked out her sister's den. *That must be painful.* She watched as Rainstorm walked into Grassheart's den and a second later he angrily stomped into Icestar's den. She shook her head then walked to the medicine den. She met Echomist inside the den.
"I think somethings wrong with Icestar." She quickly meowed. Echomist looked up with worry in her eyes.
"She exploded in anger at Rainstorm. Who treats their sister like that? She also took away her senior warrior title and she has to do apprentice duties for a moon." Lilymist explained. Echomist sighed then turned and picked up some herbs.
"What are those for?" Lilymist asked.
"Icestar sometimes hears voices, so it's my job to numb them out. She gets easily angered and it seems as if the voices have influence over her." Echomist said as she wrapped herbs in leaves.
"What's in them?" Lilymist asked curiously. Echomist looked up from her wrap then back down.
"Poppy seeds, chamomile and thyme. They will all soothe her mind. Don't worry about her. She says they only come once a season. She usually can sense when they are there. If you ever hear her speak of Blueshine, Spottednight or Dovewhisper, stay away from her. Mostly if she says Spottednight or Dovewhisper are speaking. They seem to be the worst. Blueshine seems to be the one that makes her a fair leader, but sometimes the other two take over." Echomist took a breath and expertly wrapped her herbs with a lily pad. "Always let her believe they are real cats. If you ever tell her they are fake, she will hurt you." Echomist took a shaky breath and beckoned Lilymist to the back of her den. "I'm about to tell you something that you must never ever repeat to anyone else. Swear it on the most valued thing in your life." Echomist seriously meowed. She seemed to be searching Lilymist's gaze for something unseen.
"I swear on the life of Owlheart's kits." Lilymist breathed. Echomist swallowed then shakily spoke.
"Before you were born Icestar had a mate named Mapletail. Mapletail was murdered by what we all assumed to be a fox. It turned out that Icestar was the killer. She said Dovewhisper told her to do it. She said that he would destroy the Clan." Echomist's eyes flashed as if she had seen a memory. She shuddered and dipped her

head to Echomist.
"I have to sleep in the elders den. Good night Echomist." Lilymist turned around and walked to the elders den. She circled in her new nest then fell asleep. She dreamed of a fox and a fluffy gray she cat laughing wildly over a dead toms body. She dreamed of Icestar stiffly walking to a stream to rinse the scent of blood. She dreamed of horror and blood until she saw a silver tabby scare the darkness away. Lilymist curled tighter and snuggled down to sleep sweet dreams, surrounded by the scent of Owlheart and Mintfur.

Chapter 29

Lilymist sat up and stretched, letting out a yawn. It was her final day being confined to the elders den. Icestar had apologized for her behaviour not long after she lashed out, but the punishment for both Lilymist and Rainstorm was still carried out. Lilymist had not spoken to her mother since they were in Icestar's den. Lilymist walked outside the den and heard Icestar call a meeting.
"All cats old enough to swim gather beneath the Tallstone for a Clan meeting!" Icestar yowled at her Clan as they were starting to wake up. The Clan slowly crept out of their dens and sat in the clearing.
"I would just like to announce that young Adderpaw and Skypaw will be performing their warrior assessments today, so please wish them luck. Grassheart will now assign you to your patrols." She meowed then leaped off the stone. The Clan wished luck to the apprentices. Adderpaw sat tall, with his chin raised and his chest puffed out in pride. His shoulders had grown strong and broad, just like his father's. Skypaw looked nervous and shy. One of her paws were raised in caution. Even in her nervous state determination and pride seeped out of her. Grassheart had waited for the cheers to stop and he patiently sat on the Tallstone, waiting for silence.
"Berrysplash, you will lead the border patrol. Check all the borders. Take Snowbreeze, Lionscar, Cloudpaw and Frostpaw. I want Sparrowleaf to lead a hunting patrol. Bring Grayheart and Reedpaw. Icestar and I have also decided who will supervise the assessment. Obviously Icestar and I will supervise our own apprentices, but we have decided that two young warriors will need to learn how to assess their own apprentices so Sunfrost will help me assess Adderpaw while Lilymist helps Icestar." Grassheart ordered he waited for everyone to get in their groups then nodded. When he nodded Icestar left with Adderpaw and Skypaw. "Good. Once the apprentices get back from their patrols Jasperheart, Rainstorm and Olivenose will take the apprentices out battle training. If the apprentices want to be back in time I suggest leaving now." Grassheart meowed to everyone then leaped down to where Sunfrost and Lilymist sat.
"We will assess their fighting skills later. We don't want them to be

tired during hunting." Grassheart led the warriors out of camp and towards a clearing where Icestar and the apprentices waited. She was talking with the apprentices. Icestar raised her tail then lashed it and the apprentices ran in different directions.
"I told Adderpaw to find a trout and a blackbird. He has enough strength to leap high enough to catch the bird." She meowed to Grassheart. He nodded and followed his apprentice with Sunfrost behind him.
"What is Skypaw hunting?" Lilymist asked. Icestar crouched down and moved into the forest stealthily.
"Pike and mouse." Icestar whispered. Lilymist nodded and followed her through the bushes. Icestar raised her tail in warning as they got closer to Skypaw. She had seen a mouse and was crouching about two tail lengths away. It looked as though she had been expertly trained by a ThunderClan warrior. Her tail was raised off the ground and she was upwind. The mouse must have heard something because it starting sniffing the air. Skypaw leaped and landed right on the brown creature. She quickly killed it and hid it under a root. Lilymist was impressed at the apprentice's skill. Skypaw had started to creep through the forest towards the river. When she got to the river she patiently waited beside the water until the pike came to swim by. It was past sunhigh when the fish came, but Skypaw was ready. Once the pike got close enough, Skypaw raised a paw then slashed the fish and carried it on shore to kill it. The brown she cat carried her fish back to the spot where she had left the mouse and carried it to the battle training clearing. Icestar and Lilymist ran ahead, being careful so Skypaw couldn't see them. When the reached the clearing Sunfrost, Grassheart and Adderpaw were already waiting there. Skypaw arrived soon after they got there.
"You both have done well with your hunting." Icestar praised the apprentices after speaking with Grassheart.
"First Adderpaw will battle Sunfrost. Remember keep your claws sheathed we don't need any injuries." Grassheart meowed, looking at Lilymist. He clearly hadn't forgotten how she had hurt Lionscar. She shook it off and watched the two toms fight. Adderpaw was circling Sunfrost and hissing. Sunfrost shot forward to attack, but Adderpaw leaped up in the air and came crashing down on Sunfrost. He quickly stood back up and swiped a paw out at the apprentice. Adderpaw took advantage of his opponents move and

slid under Sunfrost. He pulled the warrior down and held his scruff to the ground, showing he had won.
"Well done, Adderpaw!" Grassheart purred. Sunfrost stood up and shook the dust off his pelt. The tom dipped his head to Adderpaw then sat down beside Grassheart.
"Lilymist and Skypaw." Icestar meowed. Lilymist stood across from Skypaw. At Icestar's signal Skypaw shot forward and head butted the warrior in the chest. The impact left Lilymist staggering, but she shook her head and focused on Skypaw. She slashed her paw out and tried to hit Skypaw's flank. Skypaw leaped up and landed behind Lilymist. Skypaw turned and body slammed her before she could spin around. Lilymist slid on the ground and Skypaw leaped across the clearing and landed beside Lilymist. The apprentice lowered her head to grab Lilymist's scruff. She touched it to the ground and Lilymist stood up.
"Good job." Lilymist purred as she dipped her head. Skypaw purred and raised her tail in happiness.
"You both have done well. You will become warriors." Icestar purred. The apprentices skipped happily towards the camp and the others fell in behind them.

"All cats old enough to swim gather beneath the Tallstone for a Clan meeting." Lilymist heard Icestar yowl. She swallowed the last bit of the salmon she was eating and sat beneath the Tallstone.
"Skypaw and Adderpaw have passed their assessments and so I am rewarding their hard work with warrior names." Icestar yowled.
The two apprentices sat in front of the Clan. Their fur was perfectly groomed and their ears were pricked up.
"I, Icestar, leader of Riverclan call my warrior ancestors to look upon these apprentices. They have trained hard to understand the way of your noble code. do you promise to protect and defend this clan even at the cost of your lives?"
She called to Adderpaw and Skypaw.
"I do." They both promised, their eyes shining with excitement.
"Then by the power of StarClan, I give you your warrior names. Skypaw from this day forward, you shall be known as Skygaze. StarClan honours your patience and intelligence. Adderpaw from the day forward, you shall be known as Adderblaze. StarClan honours your strength and determination. We welcome you as full warriors of RiverClan!" Icestar yowled.

"Skygaze! Adderblaze! Skygaze! Adderblaze!" The Clan cheered for the new warriors. Skygaze and Adderblaze licked Icestar's shoulders before joining their fellow warriors. *I can sleep in the warriors den again!* Lilymist raced over to congratulate them. Skygaze was standing there, basking in the cheers of her Clanmates.
"Skygaze! Well done!" Lilymist meowed. Skygaze purred and glanced over her shoulder. Lilymist looked and saw Adderblaze purring and laughing with Cloudpaw.
"Congratulate Adderblaze for me. I'll leave him with Cloudpaw." She purred.

Chapter 30

Lilymist woke up to the chilly dawn breeze wishing through the warriors den. She sat up and looked around. The dawn patrol had just left and no one else had awoken yet. She carefully stepped around the sleeping cats and left the den. Adderblaze and Skygaze were guarding the camp. She nodded to them and padded to the nursery. She picked up a small water vole from the fresh kill pile on her way. Hailkit and Stormkit were already awake and whispering to each other in their nest. She nodded to them and they quietly squeaked.
"Hi Lilymist! Is that for us?" Stormkit meowed in his high pitched kit voice. She gave a small purr and set the vole down.
"I brought it for Brightcloud, but you are welcome to try some." She nudged the prey towards the kits, whose eyes were shining. "Just don't eat it all or you'll get a belly ache." She whispered. She turned her head to look at her nieces. They were curled together in a fluffy ball of brown and silver. She felt her heart ache. *Owlheart and Tigerkit should be there.* She thought sadly.
"Thanks Lilymist!" Hailkit mumbled through a mouthful of prey. "I don't really like the taste of fish. It's too..." He trailed off as he thought of the word to describe fish. "Tangy. It just tastes weird. This is better." The kit said at last.
"Well at least you are eating something." She mumbled. She walked to the medicine den after saying goodbye to the kits. She knew Echomist knew who the father of these toms were. Neither Rainwhisker or Brightcloud had a long furred tail, but Foxbelly did and it seemed Stormkit had inherited it. Hailkit had his wide paws and already was starting to show signs of his powerful hind legs.
"Echomist?" She meowed.
"What do you need?" The silver medicine cat replied. Lilymist shifted her paws and sat down.
"You know who fathered Brightcloud's kits, right?" She asked. Echomist got a look of shock and hissed.
"Of course I do! Do you think I wouldn't recognize a kits father!" She snapped, offended. Lilymist felt her ears burn.
"I wasn't doubting you medicine cat abilities. The kits ate vole for

the first time. They loved it and said they didn't really like fish." Lilymist meowed looking at Echomist's paws. Echomist sighed and turned around to start preparing herbs.
"I know you didn't mean to offend me. I have noticed things about the kits. When Rainwhisker tried to teach them how to swim Hailkit enjoyed it, but Stormkit seems to be a dry paw." Echomist shook her head sadly. "It won't be long before Rainwhisker learns they aren't his." Lilymist looked at her in shock. How could she be so sure that they would be discovered?
"I'm sure that we can teach them to like fish. Stormkit will grow out of this little stage he's having." Lilymist comforted Echomist.
"I sure hope so. It would break Brightcloud's heart of she had to send them away." Echomist sighed. Lilymist stood up and shook the dried reed out of her fur.
"I've got to go. I'll talk to you later." Lilymist started to walked out the den when Echomist mumbled something.
"I'm sorry could you repeat that?" Lilymist looked over her shoulder.
"I said, you better come back later. Pixiepaw has been asking for you." Echomist repeated louder.
"Where is she?" Lilymist asked. She almost never saw the apprentice in camp.
"That's between me and her." Echomist meowed coolly. Lilymist shrugged and continued on walking into the clearing. The Clan had woken up and Icestar had called a meeting.
"As you all know tonight is the gathering. We will be taking Adderblaze, Skygaze, Rainwhisker, Grayheart, Snowbreeze, Appleglow, Berrysplash, Sunfrost, Lionscar, Lilymist, Cloudpaw and Frostpaw. Obviously Grassheart, Echomist, Pixiepaw and myself will be attending." Icestar's voice rang around the clearing. She watched as Littlefoot stood up.
"Silverdust and I would like to attend." Littlefoot rasped. Lilymist realized with a jolt how frail her grandmother was getting.
"Are you sure Littlefoot. You are getting older and I don't want you hurting yourself trying to go to a gathering." Icestar asked the elder, worry flashing in her eyes. Littlefoot and Silverdust both nodded.
"Very well. Silverdust I know you still have warrior strength, but Rainwhisker and Grayheart will assist you to the gathering. Littlefoot will be assisted by myself and Sparrowleaf. Those I didn't call meet Grassheart for your duties. Everyone else get some rest for tonight." Icestar meowed then leaped off the Tallstone. Duskflower,

Reedpaw, Featherpaw, Swanshine, Olivenose, Rainstorm and Jasperheart walked over to Grassheart and bent their heads together. Lilymist heard the apprentices grumble then walk to the nursery. Lilymist purred then padded into the warriors den and curled up.

Lilymist woke up to Lionscar shaking her shoulder with his paw. "Wake up! We're leaving soon." He growled in her ear. She jumped up and quickly groomed herself. She purred when she saw Lionscar. "Are you really going to the gathering like that?" She purred. He shrugged. The fur on his face was tufty and had little bits of mud on the left side of his face. She rasped her tongue over his face and cleaned the mud out. She felt him flinch when she went over his eye. She looked at the scar in sadness. Her claws had scratched the eyes and he had been blind on the left side ever since.
"I'm sorry." She meowed sadly. He caught on quickly and stared at her with his good eye.
"Don't be. I'm as normal a warrior as anyone and probably one of the best fighters." He shrugged, but she could tell it was bothering him by a strange fire lighting his eyes. She heard Icestar call and they made their way through the forest to the gathering. ShadowClan arrived last and Lilymist looked around for Raggedmoon. He was the ShadowClan deputy. He was friendly and funny. She saw him and weaved through the cats.
"Hi Raggedmoon." She called cheerfully. He spun around at the sound of his name and dipped his head in greeting.
"How are you?" She asked. He looked behind her and smiled then looked back at her.
"I'm doing well. Prey is running well in ShadowClan." He purred, his voice a deep rumble. Lilymist turned around and saw a ginger she cat with black stripes and hazel eyes. The cat started walking towards Raggedmoon. Lilymist watched her nuzzle him and purred quietly.
"Is this your mate?" She asked Raggedmoon.
"Yes. This is Lionstripe. Lionstripe, this is Lilymist." He introduced the she cats.
"Nice to meet you." Lionstripe quietly meowed. Lilymist dipped her head in response and sat down. Brackenstar had started the gathering.
"Prey is running well in ThunderClan. We have two new warriors!

Poppyfall and Badgerpool!" Brackenstar yowled. The four Clans cheered for the warriors. Lilymist craned her head up to look. She recognized Badgerpool, and guessed that the small brown she cat beside him was Poppyfall. Her green eyes were filled with pride and she was purring. Lilymist looked back up at the leaders and saw Brackenstar had stepped back and Dawnstar was in his place.
"We are happy to report that Harebreeze has had three healthy kits. Their father is Fawnleap. They have named them Kestralkit, Gorsekit and Crowkit!" Dawnstar yowled with pride. Lilymist noticed a pale brown tom sat up taller. *That is probably Fawnleap.*
Dawnstar stepped back, dipping her head to Icestar.
"RiverClan is sad to report the death of Owlheart. She died giving birth to Sunfrost's three kits. Her only tom kit died with her. Sunfrost and Owlheart named the kits before her death. Their names are Lichenkit and Moonkit. RiverClan shall honour her memory." Icestar yowled with sadness and grief. Lilymist looked around and saw Sunfrost beside Appleglow. The red tom rested his tail on his son's shoulder. The Clans whispered and mumbled in sadness. It was rare for a queen to die during birth. Lilymist looked back up, her eyes shining in grief.
"In better news we have two new warriors. Adderblaze and Skygaze!" Icestar yowled, pride replacing the sadness. The Clans cheered for Adderblaze and Skygaze. Lizardstar stepped up.
"Ivyleaf has joined StarClan. ShadowClan will miss her, but her apprentice, Shrewpath, will be an excellent medicine cat. Ivyleaf chose a great apprentice when she chose him." Lizardstar meowed.
The medicine cats all nuzzled Shrewpath and welcomed him.
"This gathering is over. May StarClan light your paths!" Brackenstar yowled then leaped off the rock. The other leaders followed after him and started to lead their own Clans home.
"Goodbye. It was nice to meet you." Lilymist purred to Raggedmoon and Lionstripe.
"Lilymist! Hurry up!" Berrysplash called to her.
"I'm coming!" She yelled back then trotted over to her Clan.

Chapter 31

Lilymist followed her Clan back through the trees to their camp. Snowbreeze and Berrysplash walked ahead of her, purring and laughing. Lilymist purred, they were acting like kits. The Clan returned home and everyone went to their nests. Lilymist sat down and curled into a tight ball beside Skygaze. The warriors were all snoring away, deep in their slumber. Lilymist wriggled around, trying to get comfortable. The air was hot and damp. Lilymist faced the den entrance in hopes for a breeze to come in the den. She raised her head, feeling as if someone was watching her. She instinctively looked outside for intruders, but saw no one. She turned her gaze around the den when it landed on Adderblaze's empty nest. He insisted on sleeping in the apprentices den until Cloudpaw was a warrior, so his littermates wouldn't bully him. She shrugged and snuggled down again.

Unbeknownst to Lilymist, someone was watching her. They closed their eyes when she looked around. The second she lay back down, their amber eyes glinted in the dark den. *It was all your fault.*

Lilymist awoke and yawned. *Fish guts! It's almost sunhigh.* She scrambled out of the den and ran into a rather annoyed looking Grassheart.

"Just waking up now I see. You're lucky I didn't assign you to the dawn patrol." Grassheart hissed. Lilymist dipped her head to the deputy.

"I'm sorry. I went to the gathering last night and I was tired." She apologized. Grassheart rolled his eyes and stared at her sternly. "Your Clanmates also went to the gathering. That is no excuse. You don't have any special privileges. The patrols have already left. Clean out the nursery, then help Cloudpaw with cleaning the elders den." He meowed, then turned and swiftly walked to the leaders den. She sighed and walked to the elders den. It was made of an old oak tree. Moss grew thickly around the base. She carefully pulled clumps of moss off. Lilymist piled all the moss on the largest piece and dragged it towards the nursery. She entered the den and looked around. Brightcloud, Hailkit and Stormkit weren't there, but

Lichenkit and Moonkit were there sitting in front of Cloudpaw. He looked at the kits with happiness lighting his eyes. She cleared her throat to let him know she was there. His gaze bolted up and he stood up.
"Lilymist! I was only watching them, I swear I wasn't hurting them." He stuttered. She looked at him with confusion.
"Of course you weren't hurting them. Why would you say that?" She asked the white tom. He shuffled his paws and looked at her.
"Reedpaw says I might lose my balance and squash them. I've been extra careful around them so that didn't happen." He mumbled. She purred and shook her head.
"They opened their eyes. They are brilliant." Cloudpaw purred, staring down at the two kits. Lilymist walked over beside them and purred. Their eyes were both blue still. Lichenkit bent her head back and squealed.
"Wow! You're huge! I'm like the size of your paw!" She exclaimed excitedly. She tried bouncing around, but Moonkit pounced on her and started play fighting. Lilymist chuckled then pulled the two kits apart.
"Where's Brightcloud little ones?" She asked them. Moonkit shrugged and pounced on Cloudpaw's tail.
"She took Hailkit and Stormkit to Echomist. They were coughing and sneezing all night." Lichenkit explained. Lilymist licked the kits head and quickly left the den. She swiftly padded to the medicine den. She gasped as she heard coughing and sniffling. She cautiously entered the den and her heart broke. She saw Brightcloud coughing beside Hailkit and Stormkit. She looked on in horror when she heard Echomist cough.
"They have greencough. I fear they may pass it on to Lichenkit and Moonkit. I've sent Pixiepaw to tell Swanshine that she will be caring for them." Echomist coughed again and scooped some herbs up and ate them.
"Are you sick?" Lilymist asked.
"They have already passed it on to me." Echomist sniffled.
"Sparrowleaf trained as a medicine cat for the first three moons of her apprenticeship. She still remembers how to treat greencough so she will be helping Pixiepaw until I get better. I don't want Pixiepaw to get sick." Echomist coughed. Lilymist stared in shock at the kits. They were two moons old and still weak. Brightcloud's eyes were crusted shut and her nose looked dry. Lilymist walked out of

the den and into the warriors den. She sat down thinking for a couple minutes then went outside to get prey. The sun was beginning to go down and Lilymist settled down with a couple minnows. She had finished eating when she saw Pixiepaw creep into the camp from behind the nursery. That passageway was only for if a Clan attacked the camp so the queens could escape. Her suspicion deepened when the she cat creeped around the outside of camp. She walked up to the apprentice.
"What are you doing?" Lilymist asked. Pixiepaw flinched and looked up at her.
"Echomist and I have an agreement. A couple times a moon she lets me go to the Twoleg place to visit my father, Zyler and my brother, Spark." Pixiepaw blurted out. "I've got to go." She quickly mewed and raced into the medicine den. *Whatever.* Lilymist turned to go to the warriors den. She crept inside and lay down. She fell asleep quickly. Her dreams were filled with disturbing things. Blurry colours spreading through the camp and a horrible screeching filled her mind. She heard squealing and a gut wrenching yowl filled with grief and desperation. She sat up when the last image left. It was of her, yowling into a tunnel of colour. She cleared her head when she smelled it. Smoke.

Chapter 32

[image]

Lilymist quickly sat up and looked outside the den. The night sky was disturbed by an orange glow. She looked in horror around the camp, flames were flickering on the trees near the nursery. She heard an ear splitting yowl.
"Get out! Everyone get out! NOW!" Grassheart commanded. Everyone burst out of their dens and raced towards the camp entrance. Lilymist followed them glanced back at the medicine den and saw Pixiepaw carrying Hailkit. Sparrowleaf was beside her holding Stormkit. *They can handle it.* She raced after her Clanmates towards the WindClan border. They dodged through the trees until they reached the moor where ShadowClan was gathered. The four Clans had an agreement if there was a fire the forest Clans may gather on the moor to escape the flames. They were coughing and sneezing. Shrewpath was racing around checking everyone. Pixiepaw and Sparrowleaf joined him while Echomist stayed with the sick cats.
"RiverClan line up!" Grassheart commanded. Everyone lined up and Grassheart counted everyone.
"We got out in time." Icestar yowled. The Clan's cheering was interrupted by a desperate screech.
"Who brought my kits!?" Sunfrost yowled. When no one responded, him and Grassheart swiftly ran back into the forest. Lilymist raced after them in fear. *How could I forget them?* She was coughing and covered in ash when they got back to the camp. Everything was gone. Flames flickered hungrily, devouring everything in sight.
"Lilymist! We'll get the kits you check for anyone else!" Grassheart ordered. Lilymist raced around the camp and shrieked. Sunfrost had ran to the moor with Moonkit, but Grassheart was still dragging Lichenkit out of the nursery. He tugged and pulled her up and then ran, Lilymist ahead of him. She dodged the trees and the flames. She heard a crack and looked back. A flaming branch was falling. Grassheart looked up and stopped. He swung his head and everything seemed to happen in slow motion. Lichenkit squealed as the flames got closer. Grassheart threw the kit at Lilymist. His yowl

sounded like that of wolf song, filled with pain and mourning. He looked at her then closed his eyes as the branch fell on him. His pained screeches cut through her and she yowled as the flames began to surround her and the kit. She picked up the kit and ran through the bushes, hot branches whipping her face. She burst out of the forest and ran to her Clan. She dropped the kit and coughed, ash coming out in clouds.
"Where's Grassheart?" Rainstorm asked, her voice cracking. Lilymist looked her in the eye and shook her head sadly. She looked down at Lichenkit. Her fur had soot covering her so she looked gray. She splayed across the ground and blacked out from pure exhaustion.

"Lilymist? We're going home." Olivenose prodded her awake. She groaned and coughed. She could still feel the fire, hear Grassheart's yowl and see his face as he was burned alive. Olivenose helped her up and she leaned on his shoulder.
"Thank you." Lilymist rasped. Her voice was dry and the fur on her face was singed. Her right ear tip was ripped off during the escape. Olivenose leaned down and licked her forehead. She normally would have pushed him away, but this time she let him help groom her. ShadowClan had left earlier and ThunderClan never showed up. RiverClan was going to leave soon. The two cats cleaned the ash off each other and when they were done it was time to leave. Icestar lead the way home with Lilymist limping beside Olivenose behind her.

DON'T READ IF YOU ARE SQUEAMISH!!!!!!

When they got to the spot where Grassheart had died it destroyed Lilymist. His suffering and pain replayed in her mind. She opened her eyes and gagged, throwing up beside a bush. His body was broken and mangled from his thrashing around. The skin on his face was burned horribly and burned flesh was peeling off his flank and belly. His fur was burned off except for a couple of patches hanging on his shoulders. His tail was split down to the bone. One of his legs must have been broken on impact with the branch because it was bent at an unnatural angle.

YOU CAN READ AGAIN

Rainstorm let out a low moan and crept towards him on her belly.

"Grassheart. Oh my handsome Grassheart. What happened to you? Why did StarClan do this? WHY! YOU HAVE TAKEN MY DAUGHTER AND MY MATE!! TAKE ME INSTEAD! Just bring him back! Please... Bring him back..." Rainstorm sobbed. Lilymist's heart wrenched at hearing her mother's grief. She pressed her nose into Olivenose's shoulder. She started sobbing. Through glazed eyes she looked over at Lionscar, he was comforting his mother and Echomist. Lilymist shoved her face into Olivenose's fur again and sobbed. After a long time she felt herself calm down a little bit. Olivenose had decided to stay with Lilymist when she insisted on staying near her dead father. Rainstorm, Lionscar, Icestar, Echomist, Sunfrost, Olivenose and Lilymist were all spread around the grave made for him. They dug a hole and buried him, but Echomist placed an acorn in the dirt in hopes a strong tree would grow as her brother's grave marker. Lilymist inhaled deeply. She loved Olivenose's smell. He smelled of pine sap and the river. Lilymist was starting to get closer with Olivenose. She found comfort in him and she knew he would never do anything to make her feel bad. She lay her head down and rested it on his belly. He looked at her with fondness in his green eyes. He ran his tail down her back softly, creating a rhythm. She listened to his heartbeat and the soft snores from the cats around her. His heartbeat eventually lulled her asleep and she felt herself become attached to the gray warrior and he felt the exact same way.

"Ohana means family. Family means no one gets left behind or forgotten."

-Stitch: Lilo and Stitch

Chapter 33

When Lilymist awoke almost everyone else had left except Rainstorm and Icestar. She groggily padded away to let them finish grieving. Her fur still smelled of ash so she went to a small stream running through the forest and cleaned off. Her fur was duller than before the fire, but at least it was clean. She stiffly walked back to camp looking around in sorrow at her home. A couple of trees collapsed, linking their branches together in an arch over the forest floor. She climbed up the tree arch and sat at the top and gazed around. ThunderClan territory looked even worse than RiverClan did. Through the leafless trees, could see the warriors rushing around to fix their camp. She let out a yowl of pain and grief. *I loved Grassheart more than I would admit. I did this. I should have gone for the kits before running. It's my fault, it's always going to be my fault.* Her pained yowl cut through the barren forest. She climbed down the tree trunk and flopped on the ground. She saw a moth fluttering on the ground, a wing crumpled. She reached out her paw and unsheathed her claws. *May your journey be swift and painless.* Lilymist punctured the moths body with a claw and it stopped fluttering around. *What kind of warrior am I? Grieving for a moth.* She stood up and walked away from the place she would now call moth arch. She walked back to camp where everyone was scrambling around, repairing the broken camp. The only place that made it through was the leaders den. It was made out of a large hollow rock. She walked towards Grayheart, who seemed to be acting as deputy with his brother, Rainwhisker. The senior warriors worked together to supervise the repairs. Sparrowleaf limped up to Lilymist. She had twisted her paw during the escape.

"Lilymist I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but Littlefoot died this morning. She breathed in too much smoke." Sparrowleaf softly meowed to Lilymist, placing her tail on the warrior's shoulder.

"Thank you for telling me." Lilymist turned and walked away from Sparrowleaf, feeling too numb to even grieve for her grandmother. She walked turned back to Grayheart.

"Can I help?" She asked the gray-eared tom, her voice a hoarse whisper. Grayheart looked down at her, pity lighting his eyes.

"You can help by going to Pixiepaw and Echomist. I don't want you weak from grief." He ordered then walked over to Icestar as she entered the camp. Lilymist had never felt so alone in her life. She hadn't expected Grayheart to treat her with kindness, but she wanted him to treat her with a little sympathy. He was her mentor, mentors always have a bond with their apprentices after they become warriors. Lilymist never really clicked with Grayheart though. She snapped back at him a lot, targeted him with her anger from failing anything and was overall just a jerk. *Why should I expect anything from him?*

She padded to the medicine den dragging her tail on the ground. She sat down in one of the moss nests and rested her head on her paws.

"Are you ok?" Pixiepaw mewed.
Lilymist responded with a grunt.

"You look sick. Your eyes and fur are dull. Do you feel warm?" Pixiepaw padded towards the she cat and poked her with her nose. It was cool and soothed her heated fur.

"You do feel warm. I'll get you some moss." The apprentice padded away towards a pile of moss. She soaked it in water from a pond in the corner of her den.
"It's dry and falling apart, but it'll work until the normal moss grows back." She placed the moss in front of Lilymist. The warrior placed her forehead on the moss. It was refreshingly cold. She didn't even notice how hot she had felt. She was too busy grieving for her father.

"Did you check on the kits? Are they ok?" Lilymist asked the white apprentice. She didn't want her father's sacrifice to be a waste if the kits died.

"Yeah I did. Moonkit seems fine, no coughing or anything wrong

with her breathing. Lichenkit must have hit her head when you were running so I told Swanshine to keep an eye on her while she rests." Pixiepaw mewed. Lilymist gazed at her with relief. The young she cat was looking more like a she cat than ever. Her fur now looked sleek, despite having a patch singed on her flank. Her head was held regally and her ears lost their curve at the top and were now a perfect point. Everything about Pixiepaw said one thing: beauty. She had light silver swirls marking her white fur and her brown eyes had a serious and wise look to them. Her tail waved elegantly when she walked through camp and her paw steps were light and graceful unlike those of a kit. Sparrowleaf did a good job raising her too. She was kind, polite and respectful. She could soothe any cat from a newborn kit to the oldest elder. Lilymist was lost in thought about the young cat before her. It was almost sun down when she was told to leave the den. She padded out the den entrance, much more calm then when she entered. She wasn't shaking or stiff, Pixiepaw had soothed her with her soft voice and busy work. She had become mesmerized by the soft swish of leaves and herbs brushing together. It calmed her in a strange way.

She padded towards the fresh kill pile and chose a pitiful crow. It's meat was dry and sour, but it was food. She shared with Sunfrost and Olivenose. They were getting tired by Moonhigh so they went to the makeshift den. It was made of branches woven together in a thin layer protecting the warriors as they slept. Lilymist lay down and fell asleep after rolling around to get comfortable. She fell asleep for a short time before waking up thrashing around and shrieking for Grassheart to run. Several cats looked up at her with worry. Olivenose crept through the cats and sat down next to her. He did the same thing that he did the night before, let her rest her head on his chest and softly ran his tail down her back. Lilymist quietly sobbed for her father to run before being wrapped into a wave of safety.

He stopped running his tail after she fell asleep. She had curled up nest to him like a kit. He wrapped his body around hers and rested his head on her back. He had never felt so odd. *I don't think odd it the right word to describe it.* He thought to himself. Olivenose liked being around the she cat, as independent and distant as she may seem she wouldn't last a day alone. She needed

friends and support to keep her going. She needed family, hope and trust. *But most of all she needs love.* Olivenose felt his face flush and his ears go hot at the thought of loving her. He could never admit it in front of her. That was most likely a secret that only him and his brother would ever share. *I just hope she knows that I'll always have her back, no matter what happens. I'll protect you Lilymist, I will be the moor that protects you from the fire, if you let me, I can save you from the grief and pain.*

"It's equivalent exchange, I'll give you half of my life, if you give me half of yours."
- Edward Elric to Winry Rockwell, Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood

Chapter 34

This chapter will be focused on Olivenose and his thoughts.

Olivenose woke up to find Lilymist still curled up beside him. He purred softly and licked her ear before leaving the den. The camp was a long way from being repaired, so everyone was working when they could. Olivenose stretched outside the den, his muscles rippling under his long gray fur. He looked around for his brother. He spotted him exiting the leaders den, which was being used as the nursery. Sunfrost happily trotted towards Olivenose with a mischievous smirk crossing his face.

"Hey Olivenose! Should I prepare a nest in the nursery for you and Lilymist?" Sunfrost snickered. Olivenose heard laughing behind him as Adderblaze and Lionscar approached the two toms. He felt his ears burn and playfully hissed at Sunfrost.

"Oh you shut up you fishbrain!" He swatted the golden tom's nose. Sunfrost stared back in mock horror. Olivenose laughed and pounced on his brother. The two rolled around batting at each other's ears.

"If you have nothing better to do that fight like a couple of kits, we should put that energy to some good use." Appleglow yowled at them from across the camp, where he was sharing tongues with Swanshine. Sunfrost rolled his eyes and called back to his father.

"What do you want us to do Applestar?" He called playfully. Sunfrost earned a stern look from his father and an order to help the medicine cat. Olivenose purred when Sunfrost starting grumbling about how it wasn't a job for a warrior.

"Have fun!" Adderblaze called to the older tom. Sunfrost grumbled in reply. The two purred and laughed as Sunfrost sulked away.

"As for you three, Lionscar I want you to go check the borders with Snowbreeze and Reedpaw. Olivenose I'm putting you in charge of

making sure the camp runs smoothly while I'm gone. Adderblaze you come with me, we're going to take the apprentices to try and find moss." Grayheart ordered. Olivenose dipped his head and waved his tail in farewell to his friends. *If I'm going to be stuck here all day, I should go check on Silverdust.* Olivenose quickly cleaned all the dust off him from playing with Sunfrost. He walked into the leaders den where Silverdust was sleeping.

"What do you two think you're doing?" Olivenose asked the two kits trying to creep up on the sleeping elder. Stormkit jumped up and squeaked while Hailkit ran towards his nest.

"We were practicing our stalking." Stormkit whined. Olivenose looked at the two kits thoughtfully. *It sounds like something Sunfrost and I would do.*

"You should let her sleep. Why don't you two go check on Brightcloud. I bet she'd want to see you." Olivenose told the two kits. They scampered away and He followed them out of the den. He padded over to the fresh kill pile where there was only a small sparrow left. He picked it up and carried it into the temporary warriors den. He walked over to Lilymist's nest, where she was already awake.

"I brought you some prey." He told her nudging the bird towards her. She sniffed it then took a small bite.

"Thank you." She purred gratefully. Olivenose watched as she quickly finished the small bird.

"Did Icestar announce the deputy yet?" Lilymist worriedly asked. Olivenose shook his head and sighed.

"Icestar said that Grayheart and Rainwhisker would be acting as deputies for the time being." Olivenose explained. Lilymist closed her eyes and deeply breathed.

"It's not right. Grassheart should be out there, hunting, patrolling and fixing his Clan. He's not there because of me, if I had remembered the kits he'd still be alive." Lilymist opened her eyes and he saw they were clouded with fear and guilt. He shuffled

closer to her and placed his tail on her shoulder.

"You need to stop blaming yourself for what happened. It could have been anyone who was in that situation, it could have been Berrysplash, Echomist or even me, but it just happened to you. You were a victim. You didn't start the fire." He softly meowed. She buried her head in her paws and mumbled to the ground.

"It was me. I could have taken his place if I could. I would have taken his place six times if I had to. The sound of his screams... They'll haunt me forever. My mother's cry of sorrow will never leave my mind and poor Lichenkit, that scar on her nose will never go away. That is why it is my fault. If only I had died, it would saved a lot of trouble." Lilymist sobbed. "I wish I had died." She whispered through the tears. Olivenose was in pure shock. *What is wrong with her? I've heard of this before with Mintfur, it's a sadness that doesn't go away!*

"If you died it would be Grassheart grieving for you. Rainstorm and Lionscar would be broken. Pixiepaw adores you. Brightcloud would miss you. So would Sparrowleaf, Snowbreeze, Swanshine and Sunfrost. I would miss you." He meowed and licked her ear. Lilymist lifted her head off the ground and looked at him.

"Thank you, but that won't soothe my grief." She rasped. She sounded like she gave up on life.

"Just promise me you won't do anything irrational. I can't afford to lose you." He whispered, gazing into her dull blue eyes with his dark green eyes. She looked at him momentarily before looking away.

"Fine." She mumbled. Olivenose wasn't convinced by her promise.

"I can't lose you. I've seen the pain that Sunfrost went through when Owlheart died and I can't let you just throw your life away. I need you." He desperately meowed, hoping and praying to StarClan that she would understand what he was trying to say. She did, and looked momentarily shocked, but then it faded into consideration.

"I'm not sure now is the right time, but I still hope you will think

that way of me when I'm ready." She awkwardly explained. He felt his heart shatter. *Stupid! This is what happens when you show your weakness! They attack you where it hurts most.*

"Yeah... Ok I'll um talk to you later. I have duties to attend to." Olivenose mumbled, hoping that his heartbreak won't show. Lilymist sat there in confusion as if she didn't know what was going on.

"Just make sure you keep your promise, Lilymist." He choked out before exiting the den. He looked back at her with defeat shining in his eyes before turning away.

"I will." Lilymist quietly vowed. "I promise I will."

Chapter 35

Olivenose crawled out the den and looked around. *No use sulking, she did say she'll think about it.* He was trying to be positive. He climbed on the top of the leaders den to watch the camp and bask in the sunlight. He sat on top the stone and instantly his fur was warmed. He liked the view from up there. *I wonder what it's like looking down from the Tallstone.* There was nothing exciting going on except for the repairs continuing. His ears pricked when he heard shuffling and Lilymist exited the den. He almost gasped in shock when he saw her fur. He couldn't see properly in the dim lighting of the den, so it surprised him when he saw how matted and dull her coat looked. He sat up and leaped off the rock.

"You need help?" He offered. She shook her head and pointed with her nose towards the medicine den.

"I was going to go and talk with Pixiepaw for a while." She said over her shoulder as she padded away. There was something odd about her walk, as if she was putting all her weight on her back legs. *I'll remember to tell Echomist to check her front paws.* He walked with her and entered the temporary den. It was a big mud pit that the warriors dug for the medicine cats.

"Hey Echomist. Would you mind checking Lilymist's front paws? I think there's something wrong." He quietly explained. Echomist shook her head and looked at him.

"I've already checked and it seems she is just scared of where she is putting her paws." Echomist explained. Olivenose nodded and left the den to go sit on the rock again when he noticed Cloudpaw standing alone by the leaders den.

"Is something wrong?" He asked the white tom. Cloudpaw shuffled his paws and shook his head.

"Don't lie to me, I can tell you're lying." Olivenose warned.

"Will Lilymist get better?" Cloudpaw looked up at him with concerned yellow eyes. The question took him by shock and it took him a moment to recover.

"Why do you ask?" He asked.

"She's more fun than Snowbreeze, all Snowbreeze does is talk and talk then ask me to demonstrate. Lilymist makes a game and a scene for battle training and she treats me like an equal not a kit." Cloudpaw quietly meowed. Olivenose didn't know what to say.

"I'm sure Lilymist will be better soon." Olivenose replied hoping it would be true. Cloudpaw looked up at him again.

"So do I." Cloudpaw said. Olivenose ran his tail across the young tom's shoulders and went to sit on the rock again. He watched Lichenkit and Moonkit slowly waddle out of the den, their eyes squinted in the bright sunlight. Olivenose purred in amusement. The kit's legs were shaking as they stumbled around and their tail stuck out like a twig. He felt a surge of love towards his nieces. They were almost two moons old. He leaped off the warm rock and landed carefully beside the kits. They stared at him in awe. Their tiny mouths hung open.

"Did you just jump off that rock and landed here?" Lichenkit squeaked. "That was awesome!" Moonkit nodded in agreement. He purred at them and noticed their eyes. They were still pale blue, but Moonkit's were starting to turn amber, just like her father's. Lichenkit had brown bleeding through, looking as though she had inherited Swanshine's eye colour. He heard a loud conversation going on behind him. He spun around and saw Lionscar, Snowbreeze and Reedpaw leading and small cat into the camp. Olivenose flattened his ears to his head and wrapped his tail around the kits.

"Who are you and what are you doing in RiverClan territory?" Icestar approached the small tom cautiously. The tom caught Olivenose's eye and then turned back to Icestar.

"In peace I come. Your kits I no harm." He meowed with a quiet yet powerful voice. He spoke oddly, an accent slurring his words. It

calmed Olivenose though. He sat up and flattened his fur, but still kept his tail wrapped around the kits.

"You didn't answer my question." Icestar coolly meowed. The tom nodded and sat up taller.

"I am Aban. Long way I have traveled searching for cats of Clan. My Mama told me story, story of kit she had. That kit left with father. The kits name Lucian. Lucian found Clan. Where is Lucian?" Aban looked around trying to find the cat called Lucian. Olivenose noticed how odd the tom looked. He was short, with orange fur. He looked simple, so simple that it was strange. His eyes were a yellowish green.

"I knew Lucian. To the Clans he was known as Rowantail. I'm sorry Aban, but he has died many moons ago." Echomist stepped out of the makeshift nursery. A path appeared as cats stepped out of her way. She came face to face with the stranger and he flinched.

"You have power. Rank so no disrespect." He mewled. Echomist understood him and smiled.

"Yes I do. I am a medicine cat and the Clan must respect me. Could you sense the power around me?" She curiously asked. Aban nodded.

"I sense power, love, secret and future sometimes." He smiled with pride. "My Mama taught me." The Clan started speaking in hushed voices and they seemed excited. Icestar stepped towards Aban, her eyes bright with hope. Grayheart, Adderblaze and the apprentics entered the camp and wandered towards the group of cats surrounding Aban. Some cats quietly explained what was going on.

"Will you help us? Can you please sense my Clan's future?" Icestar asked. Aban happily nodded and Icestar started giving out commands.

"All mates will sit side by side over there. All kits will sit beside their mother and father. Apprentices will sit there and warriors sit here." She yowled, pointing with her tail in different directions. Aban started with the kits.

"Gold tom and kits. Where mother?" He asked Sunfrost. Sunfrost mumbled something and Aban sadly shook his head. "Too bad. You very much love her. You miss her lot. She live in kits spirit." He licked each of the kits heads and dipped his head to Sunfrost.

"You golden tom, have dark future. Kits bring hope." Aban told Sunfrost. The orange tom moved onto Brightcloud.

"You have secret silver one. These kits not his. Not all kits here." Aban stared at Brightcloud. She looked down in shame and sadness. *What is that all about?* Rainwhisker looked at his mate and kits.

"I know." Was all the gray tom said. Aban moved on to the apprentices and passed all the apprentices except for Cloudpaw who was sitting beside Adderblaze.

"Love is strange. You two are love." He muttered as he passed the toms. Everyone looked confused as they had never heard of toms in love. The Clan shrugged and continued watching Aban. The orange tom weaved his way between the warriors until he reached Duskflower. The black queen was still staring at Cloudpaw and Adderblaze.

"You mother of white one. Why you not like him?" Aban asked curiously. Duskflower looked at the tom with regret in her gaze. She looked back at her son who was staring at his mother.

"I don't know. He was born weak. I feared his weakness would affect the other kits so I separated him." Duskflower meowed sadly. Olivenose looked up from the queen to see Reedpaw, Frostpaw, Featherpaw and Grayheart all approaching Cloudpaw.

"I'm sorry..." Grayheart started saying to his son. Cloudpaw looked back at his father with anger lighting his yellow eyes.

"If you were truly sorry you would have helped me earlier. I had to suffer from her neglect for almost 3 seasons." Cloudpaw hissed at his father with venom. Cloudpaw pushed past his father and ran out of the camp sobbing. Adderblaze looked back at Grayheart then ran after Cloudpaw. Aban sat and watched then looked back at Duskflower. He didn't say anything, but he placed his tail on her

shoulder as he passed. He stepped up to Lilymist and stared at her.

"You have lost everything. You give up. Turn around, find light, great change happen." Aban meowed to the red she cat. Lilymist looked up at him and Olivenose saw a little bit of light flickering in her dull blue eyes. She nodded slightly and Aban moved away. He passed Pixiepaw and dipped his head to her in respect. He almost walked past Olivenose then he stopped and walked backwards. He looked Olivenose up and down.

"You love her. She has flaws, but you look past it. You make good mate." Olivenose felt his ears burn and he looked at Lilymist. She was looking at her paws, but Olivenose could see a small smile spreading across her face. *Thank you Aban!*

Chapter 36

Back to Lilymist .

Lilymist watched as Aban stopped in front of Olivenose. The strange tom spoke of her in his fortune, but not by name. She looked at her paws and smiled ever so slightly. Aban wandered through the Clan then stopped back in front of Icestar.

"Fascinating life you have. Secrets here, love here, regret here." Aban turned and looked at Duskflower when he said regret. Lilymist felt bad for the poor she cat, but by now it was too late to help with anything.

"Thank you Aban. I have one more favour to ask. Will you cross the river and ask the same thing to the cats living there?" Icestar eagerly asked the traveler. Aban nodded and seemed excited to learn more about Clan life. Lilymist secretly worried about the tom. ThunderClan was aggressive towards outsiders. Aban would have to act really stupid to get in their ranks.

"Then you shall leave at once. Olivenose, Berrysplash and Skygaze will be your escorts." Icestar beckoned the three forward with her tail. "All others will continue with the repairs. I want Sunfrost and Lilymist to go look for Adderblaze and Cloudpaw. Sunfrost knows Adderblaze well and Lilymist knows Cloudpaw." Lilymist sat up and cranes her neck up to find Sunfrost. She spotted him and padded over. He was saying goodbye to his kits. *How could I ever want to leave them?* They nodded to each other then padded into the forest. Sunfrost was keeping his pace slow so that Lilymist could keep up. They followed the scent trail to the battle training hollow. Adderblaze was there with Cloudpaw, sitting and talking. Lilymist strained her ears to hear them better.

"...I'm Duskflower. What do you say to me?" Adderblaze asked the small tom sitting in front of him. Cloudpaw looked up at him.

"I'm sorry...mother. You love me so much, but you hurt me and I

won't forget that." Cloudpaw quietly mewled, his eyes shiny and sad. Lilymist and Sunfrost sat there listening until Adderblaze had acted out Cloudpaw's entire family. Cloudpaw looked stronger, mentally by the time they were done.

"Thank you." Cloudpaw meowed and stretched up to lick Adderblaze's nose. The toms sat there in silence, Adderblaze's head resting on Cloudpaw's. Lilymist was touched by the scene and it melted her heart. The toms walked towards the bush they were hiding in and Sunfrost flicked his tail, warning her to stand up.

"How long have you been there?" Cloudpaw asked calmly. His fur looked ruffled and Adderblaze still towered over the young tom. Cloudpaw was only up to his shoulder, but he would grow.

"Not long. We were out looking for you." Sunfrost replied. Lilymist saw a flicker of panic in Cloudpaw's eyes and Adderblaze quickly looked down.

"I can't go back." Cloudpaw mewled like a kit. Adderblaze looked forward again, but he placed his tail on Cloudpaw's back. The white apprentice's fur flattened and he nodded.

"I'm ready." Cloudpaw breathed. Sunfrost and Lilymist led them back to camp through the brittle trees and the dead grass. No one said a word as they walked. By the time they got back, it was almost sundown. Lilymist followed Sunfrost into the camp. Instantly Grayheart looked up, hoping to see his son. He walked towards the toms as they entered, but Adderblaze warned him to stay back with a quick glance.

"May I use the Tallstone?" Cloudpaw quietly asked Icestar. Icestar hesitated then nodded slowly. Cloudpaw jumped onto the Tallstone and Adderblaze followed him up. Lilymist could see that their tails were twined.

"As you all know I am the son of Duskflower and Grayheart. I am the brother of Frostpaw, Reedpaw and Featherpaw. I was once the brother of Ravenkit." Cloudpaw announced to the Clan. Duskflower let out a choking sound at the mention of Ravenkit.

"I have something to say to them and I want the Clan to hear it." Cloudpaw looked to his side and Adderblaze nodded with encouragement. Cloudpaw took a deep breath and searched the crowd.

"Reedpaw, I will always know that you were once my brother. You bullied me as a kit, you never treated me fairly and I cannot forgive you. Featherpaw, you sided with Ravenkit and Reedpaw in tormenting me, you were never truly my sister." Cloudpaw meowed, his eyes cold and guiltless. "I can consider Frostpaw my sister because she never hurt me. That does not mean I forgive the rest of you though." Frostpaw looked up at her brother, surprise and pride lighting her pale eyes. The silver swirled she cat looked over at her brother and sister, arrogance faintly flickering in her gaze.

"Grayheart was a bystander and he knew what was going on so I cannot accept him as my father. Duskflower. I'm sorry I wish I could have loved you, I truly do, but you hurt me. Both mentally and physically. You have called me a runt and useless. You have hit me with your claws unsheathed. For that, I cannot love you and I deny you as my mother. From now on you are nothing but a Clanmate to me." Cloudpaw yowled with fury. His yellow eyes gleamed with courage and fire when he spoke to his mother. Lilymist looked at Duskflower and watched as she lowered her head in defeat. Grayheart, who was sitting beside his mate, slouched down in acceptance and regret. Featherpaw and Reedpaw looked embarrassed and they were looking at each other with sadness. Only Frostpaw sat up in pride, her chest puffed out and her eyes gleaming like pools of water with fallen stars. Cloudpaw stood on top the Tallstone beside Adderblaze, the breeze swirling his fur around, but he just stood there watching the Clan as they grieved for the broken family. The wind quickened and Lilymist looked up at the toms on the Tallstone. They were clinging on to each other to stop one another from falling. They cared deeply about each other and everyone could see that

"How can you move forward if you
keep regretting the past?"

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Unknown

Chapter 37

Cloudpaw leaped from the Tallstone, Adderblaze following him. The white tom looked around with authority and pride. Adderblaze sat beside him and started caressing Cloudpaw's back with his brown striped tail. Icestar stood up from her spot in the crowd and jumped onto the Tallstone. She commanded total attention with just a flick of her tail.

"Cloudpaw has said what he wanted and now I shall say what I wish. Cloudpaw has shown bravery today so to reward him for being strong he will have his final assessment tomorrow." Icestar hesitated for a moment in thought.

"His sister, Reedpaw and Featherpaw will also perform their assessments." Icestar yowled and the Clan cheered. Reedpaw and Featherpaw looked at Cloudpaw and Frostpaw, who were sitting beside each other with Adderblaze. Icestar dismissed the Clan and leaped off the Tallstone, landing in front of Lilymist.

"Cloudpaw was your apprentice so you will have one final training session with him. I will let Snowbreeze know. You will also be the one I will address at his ceremony." Icestar quickly whispered in Lilymist's ear. Lilymist nodded her thanks then walked to the makeshift warriors den. She settled down in the bracken and stared up at the stars that were shining through the woven den. *Is Littlefoot up there with Grassheart, Mintfur and Owlheart?* Lilymist curled up tighter and fell into the first dreamless sleep she had for almost a moon.

Lilymist woke up and strangely didn't yawn. She wasn't tired like the other nights. She left the den and walked to the clearing to find the apprentices waiting for her there. Sunfrost, Olivenose and Lionscar were already up and training their apprentices for the assessment. Lilymist walked up to Cloudpaw and he started demonstrating what he had learned from Snowbreeze. This went on until sunhigh, when the assessment began. They started with hunting; each apprentice was only required to bring back one piece

of prey. The type didn't matter. They gathered at the battle training hollow and showed their mentors their prey. Frostpaw brought a couple minnows, Reedpaw caught a small trout, Featherpaw brought down a young hare and Cloudpaw caught a sparrow. They paired up for battle training, with Frostpaw against Cloudpaw and Featherpaw against Reedpaw. All the apprentices did very well and Reedpaw especially was going to be a great warrior. His battle skills were almost perfected, the only flaws were in the timing of his attacks. Frostpaw turned out to be an amazing fighter too. She had altered the moves to suit her small stature. Featherpaw was good in battle, but her strong point was in hunting. Cloudpaw was very good at hunting and in battle he also altered the moves. He was naturally swift and agile so he added parts where he could outsmart his opponent with speed. Lilymist was pleased with her apprentice and she praised him all the way back to the camp. The moon was starting to rise and the apprentices were all excited. When the time finally came, they were all squirming in excitement. Icestar exited her den and walked to the base of the Tallstone. An aura of importance and pride surrounded her. She leaped up the Tallstone, clawing her way to the top.

"These four apprentices have finished their assessments, so as leader it is my duty to reward them for their hard work." Icestar yowled. She didn't need to use the Clan meeting call because everyone was already there.

"Lionscar, do you feel that Featherpaw is ready to become a warrior?" Icestar addressed the red tom standing behind Featherpaw.

"I do." Lionscar purred, dipping his head.

"Sunfrost, is Frostpaw ready to become a warrior?" The blue eyed she cat asked.

"Without a doubt." Sunfrost meowed, a hint of arrogance in his reply.

"Olivenose, is Reedpaw ready to be a warrior?" Icestar asked the gray tom.

"Of course he is." Olivenose replied, his voice deep and husky.

"Lilymist, is Cloudpaw prepared to be a warrior?" Icestar called out to the red she cat.

"Yes, he is." Lilymist meowed, pride oozing out of her words. Icestar beckoned the apprentices forward with her tail.

"I, Icestar, leader of Riverclan call my warrior ancestors to look upon these apprentices. They have trained hard to understand the way of your noble code. do you promise to protect and defend this clan even at the cost of your lives?"

"I do." The apprentices mewed in unison.

"Then by the powers of Starclan, I give you your warrior names. Reedpaw from this moment on you shall be known as Reedsplash. Starclan honours your strength and skill. Featherpaw from this moment on you shall be know as Feathermist. Starclan honours your loyalty and intelligence. Frostpaw from this moment on you shall be known as Frostspiral. Starclan honours your patience and hope. Cloudpaw from this moment on you shall be known as Cloudrunner. StarClan honours your speed, agility and bravery. We welcome you as full warriors of Riverclan!" Icestar announced. The Clan cheered the new warrior's names as they basked in the approval.

"Reedsplash! Feathermist! Frostspiral! Cloudrunner!" The Clan cheered. Reedsplash, Feathermist and Frostspiral ran to their mother and father while Cloudrunner disappeared in the crowd. Lilymist followed him to Adderblaze, where they were lost in their own world. Lilymist decided to leave them alone and walked back to her spot. Snowbreeze walked up to her and dipped her head.

"Thank you for allowing me to mentor Cloudrunner." The white she cat meowed. Lilymist licked the senior warriors head and purred.

"It wasn't my decision. I'm glad Icestar chose you though." Lilymist meowed. Icestar yowled to get attention again.

"There have been a pair of brothers who have been handling the

duties of deputy for the past moon. I thank you, Grayheart and Rainwhisker, but I have made my final decision with Echomist. Lilymist will be the deputy from now on." Icestar yowled. Lilymist sat in shock for a few seconds before Snowbreeze nudged her forward. She stiffly walked to the front of the crowd and sat in front of the Tallstone.

"I never thought I would get the honour of calling myself deputy. Thank you Icestar." Lilymist awkwardly chuckled. Icestar dipped her head and spoke to the Clan once again.

"There is another naming ceremony that you should all know about. Pixiepaw is going tomorrow night to receive her full medicine cat name at the half moon." Icestar purred warmly. Everyone started congratulating the white she cat. Lilymist padded up to her and licked her forehead. Pixiepaw was still much smaller than Lilymist, but she was easily twice as beautiful. Lilymist purred and leaned down.

"Rosie would be proud of you." Lilymist whispered. Pixiepaw smiled and Lilymist looked around. She saw Icestar enter her den and Lilymist excused herself. She ran to the leaders den and padded inside.

"Icestar? Why did you choose me?" Lilymist asked the silhouette of a cat sitting in front of her. Icestar twisted around to look at Lilymist.

"I felt like I owed it to Grassheart. You were the one to go back into the fire when you had the choice to stay safe. You chose to save the ones you loved instead of yourself. The Clan needs bravery like that." Icestar explained. Lilymist felt herself flinch at the warmth in Icestar's words. She was dismissed and she stepped into the clearing. Almost everyone was going to their dens. Lilymist sighed when she remembered she had to sleep in the deputy den. Alone. She walked into the warriors den to look for that familiar pelt. She touched his shoulder with her nose.

"Olivenose? Can you sleep in the deputy den with me? I don't want to be alone." She whispered to the gray tom. He stood up and carefully wove his way through the cats setting down. The green

eyed tom followed Lilymist to her new den. They settled down in the dry bracken and curled up together.

"What does this make us?" Olivenose asked, his breath hot in her ear. Lilymist looked at him and purred softly.

"I need a mate to stand by my side. I would want no one else than you. You have helped me in my most desperate time and I owe you my life for that. I will give you the rest of my life as thanks. I will spend everyday until I join StarClan with you, Olivenose." Lilymist whispered, her voice cracking. Olivenose looked at her with surprise and love in his deep green gaze. They said nothing else, for there was nothing more to say. They curled together in a ball of gray and red swirling together.

That should have been me! While she was weak I was strong I don't deserve being passed over like this! I hissed in my mind. *That pathetic she cat doesn't deserve this honour.* My rage was reflected in my eyes. I could only imagine the look I had right now. Murderous, merciless, unforgiving. Lilymist entered the den and spoke with Olivenose then the two left together. *Stupid tom! I thought I knew you.* My rage was unbelievable. If I was blaming Olivenose then I was so mad I could kill. *Hmm. Kill. Not a bad idea.* I sat in the darkness, evil flashing in my cold amber eyes.

Chapter 38

Lilymist woke up in the deputy den, curled with Olivenose. She gently shook the gray tom awake.

"Olivenose. Wake up." Lilymist licked his ear. Olivenose groaned in his sleep then opened his eyes.

"I was worried it was just a dream." He purred. Lilymist felt her ears grow hot and she batted his head playfully.

"I've got to go make patrols." Lilymist softly meowed. She stood up and stretched then exited the den. She say Grayheart standing in the centre of camp.

"I sent out the dawn patrol for you. I hope that was ok." Grayheart explained. Lilymist felt relieved.

"Thank you." Lilymist meowed, dipping her head. Snowbreeze padded up to Lilymist. The deputy turned away from her former mentor to speak with Snowbreeze.

"May I be excused from patrols?" Snowbreeze asked. "I'm expecting kits." The white she cat meowed cheerfully. Lilymist was happy for the queen, but worried because Snowbreeze was rather old.

"Of course. May I ask who the father is?" Lilymist purred. Snowbreeze looked shy and her ears folded back.

"Berrysplash." She chuckled. Lilymist wasn't surprised. He was a handsome tom and the two had gotten close. Snowbreeze thanked Lilymist then walked towards the nursery. Lilymist watched her go into the nursery. In the last half moon the Clan managed to fix the camp. It looked almost exactly like it did before the fire. She padded to the medicine den and walked inside.

"Echomist, how long until Snowbreeze has her kits?" Lilymist questioned the medicine cat. Echomist looked up from her nap and

yawned.

"Are you worried about her too? She's not due for another half moon." Echomist lay her head back down and fell asleep again. Lilymist turned out of the den and Brightcloud walked up.

"Hey Lilymist. My two kits are almost ready to be apprentices. They have about a moon left. Should I wait another moon and a half for Lichenkit and Moonkit to be ready?" Brightcloud asked. Lilymist considered it for a second.

"In a moon I'll make them apprentices. I don't want them held back because of the other two." She choked out. It pained Lilymist to the that her sister's kits would hold Hailkit and Stormkit back. She nodded to the queen and organized patrols.

"I want Reedsplash, Skygaze, Rainwhisker and Appleglow to patrol the ThunderClan border, and while you're there keep watch for Aban. Sunfrost, Olivenose and Duskflower, patrol the WindClan border. Cloudrunner, Feathermist and Frostspiral, hunt." Lilymist awkwardly commanded. Berrysplash stepped forward.

"And who will escort Pixiepaw and Echomist safely to meet the other medicine cats tonight?" He called out. Lilymist sat down and thought for a moment.

"Sparrowleaf and Jasperheart." She ordered. Her Clanmates nodded and separated into their patrols. Lilymist sat down and watched her Clanmates bustle around her. The Clan seemed peaceful.

Later that night, the Clan stayed up to welcome Pixiepaw and Echomist back. It was well past Moonhigh when they returned. Pixiepaw ran through the camp entrance in excitement. Echomist followed behind her apprentice calmly laughing with Jasperheart and Sparrowleaf.

"We have gathered this half moon night to celebrate Pixiepaw. Will you please come up here and announce your new name to the Clan?" Icestar yowled from the Tallstone. Pixiepaw hopped over to the base of the stone and clawed her way up.

"I was named Pixiepath, in honour of the path that I had to take to get to this very moment. The path I have walked was not alone, I had my Clan, I had my family, I once had Rosie. This path has lead me to be RiverClan's next medicine cat." Pixiepath yowled. The Clan cheered her name into Silverpelt. StarClan seemed to be feeling rather happy at the former rogue's ceremony because a ray of moonlight shone down and turned the white cat's fur silver. The Clan was in awe of this honour given by StarClan.

Half a moon later

"Echomist! Pixiepath! Snowbreeze is kitting!" Brightcloud yowled. The medicine cats raced to the nursery, herbs in their jaws. It was an leaf-fall evening. The breeze was cool and an ear splitting shriek broke the cool air. Lilymist bolted up and poked her her in the nursery.

"Lilymist get your head out! You're blocking the light!" Pixiepath hissed. Lilymist jerked her head back and sat outside the entrance. She sat there until past Moonhigh, waiting. Berrysplash padded out of the den and sat down beside her, his head and tail drooping. He suddenly lay down and rested his head on her paws. Lilymist looked down in shock when she realized he was sobbing.

"She's gone. She's dead. Snowbreeze died before our kits could learn her scent." He choked out. Berrysplash curled up like a kit at her paws and shook in grief. Pixiepath and Echomist padded out of the den, dragging Snowbreeze out. Sparrowleaf and Brightcloud carried two kits out, their eyes glazed in grief. Lilymist felt her heart shatter at the sight of the daughters carrying their dead half siblings. Brightcloud turned away from her mother's body and padded back into the nursery. Lilymist stood up and padded away from the grieving father.

"How many kits did she have?" Lilymist quietly asked Pixiepath. The white she cat looked at her.

"Four. Three she cats and a tom." She replied.

"Did they name the kits before Snowbreeze..." Lilymist didn't want to say that she died. Pixiepath nodded.

"They named these two Thornkit and Dapplekit. The living kits are Lakekit and Maplekit." Lilymist looked at the two she cats laying on the cold ground. They were both tortoiseshell she cats. They were so small. She turned away and walked into the nursery. The two living kits curled next to Brightcloud. One was a white tom and the other was a small tortoiseshell she cat. Lilymist felt bad for Brightcloud because only two of the six kits at her belly were hers. Brightcloud looked stressed and strained because she had to care for six kits.

"If it will make it easier Hailkit, Stormkit, Lichenkit and Moonkit can sleep in the deputy den with me tonight." Lilymist told the silver queen. Brightcloud nodded and gently woke the four kits.

"You are sleeping with Lilymist and Olivenose in their den tonight. Doesn't that sound fun?" Brightcloud forced herself to sound cheerful.

"Cool!" Stormkit squealed. Brightcloud licked his head and then looked at them sternly.

"Listen to whatever they tell you and don't bother Olivenose." She whispered. The kits nodded then followed Lilymist out of the den. She herded the four kits into her den. Olivenose was already waiting in there for her. His eyes widened at the sight of the kits then he slowly smirked.

"I didn't expect to have kits this soon." He slyly meowed. Lilymist gasped in mock horror and pushed his shoulder. The kits were curling up already and they all piled in a lump of silver, gray and brown. Lilymist and Olivenose wrapped their bodies around the small lumps of fur. Lilymist purred and pulled them all closer. Hailkit, Moonkit and Stormkit disappeared in Olivenose's gray fur while Lichenkit blended in with Lilymist. If a cat came in who didn't know that these were not their kits, it sure looked like they were.

Chapter 39

Lilymist awoke from her sleep to Hailkit tumbling across her. She quickly raised her head and grinned. Olivenose had already woken up and was playing with the kits. Lilymist stood up and yawned. Lichenkit tumbled away from her and squeaked. The kit had still been sleeping, nestled safely beside her belly. She pulled Lichenkit closer and cleaned the soft fur. Lichenkit obediently sat in front of her as she drew her rough tongue across the brown kit's fur. She purred when Lichenkit was clean and she moved onto the other three kits. Once she was done she had patrols to set up so she left Olivenose with the kits. She jumped on the Tallstone and called out.

"I want Rainwhisker, Sparrowleaf, Skygaze and Reedsplash to patrol the WindClan border. Adderblaze, Feathermist, Appleglow and Duskflower will patrol the ThunderClan border." Lilymist yowled out commands. Brightcloud shuffled out of the nursery and looked up.

"May I go on a hunting patrol? I'll leave the kits with Swanshine." She asked hopefully. Lilymist felt a stab of pity for the queen. She would be in the nursery for another six moons until Lakekit and Maplekit were apprentices now.

"Yes of course you can. Grayheart, Brightcloud, Lionscar and Olivenose will hunt after sunhigh." She ordered then leaped off the Tallstone. She padded through the cats and reached the nursery. She crawled inside the den and saw Swanshine with two bundles by her. Swanshine's eyes were filled with affection at her niece and nephew. She took a closer look at the kits and noticed that Maplekit had light ginger dusted around her fur. Lakekit was pure white except for his brown toes and tail tip.

"They're beautiful." Lilymist told Swanshine. The elderly queen nodded and purred.

"I can tell that Maplekit will be a good warrior already. She already seems to fight her brother for who gets closest to me." She rasped.

Swanshine was getting old and she would likely be retiring soon. Lilymist remembered why she came in.

"I think Brightcloud has been over working herself. How will she feed these two? Her milk has been gone for a long time." Lilymist explained her worries to Swanshine. The queen shrugged and looked back at the kits.

"We'll find a way to feed them." She murmured. Lilymist meowed a quick good bye and exited the den to go see Icestar. She padded across the clearing to the leaders den and entered it.

"Icestar? I'm concerned about Lakekit and Maplekit. How will Brightcloud feed them? Her milk dried up a long time ago." Lilymist asked, settling down beside the leader.

"I was wondering the same thing. It's not common, but if a queen of another Clan's kits died and she still has milk, the Clans will trade. Herbs, prey, peace or even a warrior. Anything to keep the kits alive. I was thinking we go to ShadowClan." Icestar explained. Lilymist nodded.

"When should I go?" She asked her superior.

"Now. Bring Pixiepath and Silverdust. Silverdust still has warrior strength and she has seen this happen before. Pixiepath can barter with herbs. Bring one more warrior of your choice." Icestar ordered them settled back down in her nest. Lilymist got up and went to find Pixiepath and Silverdust. She had already decided to bring Berrysplash. She gathered the three and explained the mission. They set off at a quick place towards the ShadowClan territory. They crossed the large forest and camped beside the scent marker until dawn.

Lilymist woke up to Berrysplash shaking her. They were at the border and a patrol was quickly coming towards them. She recognized Lionstripe, Newtpatch, Starlingpool and Cherrypaw from gatherings. They approached cautiously.

"Hello. We have not seen RiverClan on this side of the forest for a long time." Starlingpool greeted the small group of cats.

"Yes we understand, but we have two kits that are in need of a mother. Our only queen has no milk left and these kits will starve." Lilymist explained. Lionstripe nodded and beckoned for them to follow her. They wove their way through the tall pine trees and they reached a large tree. The ShadowClan warriors looked around then crawled under the tree. Lilymist followed carefully. The tunnel was large and strangely bright. Newtpatch came last and covered the hole with a large bush near the entrance. The tunnel twisted through the roots of the large tree. They followed until it got brighter and they realized they were in the leaders den. A small hole in the top of the den let light in. Lionstripe explained their issue and Lizardstar listened.

"So you are here to offer a trade. We have one queen whose kits were recently killed. We can give her to you. Cherrypaw fetch Wrenglow please."
Lizardstar ordered the young apprentice.

"If I may, you said that her kits were killed. How?" Pixiepath asked. Lizardstar sighed and shifted to get more comfortable.

"We have been constantly threatened by ThunderClan. Our four kits went out to explore and when we found them they were on the other side of the border, slaughtered. Wrenglow was destroyed. To protect ourselves we moved underground." Lizardstar explained. "In exchange for our queen we would like an alliance and two warriors." She meowed. Lilymist only nodded.

"May I know of the names of these warriors you wish to send us?" Shrewpath asked. The tom stepped into the den and sat down beside his leader. The young medicine cat seemed concerned about this trade.

"We will most likely end up sending you Jasperheart and Frostspiral. They are both intelligence and strong. Jasperheart has experience and Frostspiral is young so she will learn easily." Lilymist explained. Shrewpath nodded.

"I will accompany you back to your Clan with Wrenglow." He purred and stood up. They all went back up the tunnel and stopped. They scented ThunderClan. The warriors were confused.

"Their scent ends here how could they just disappear? It doesn't make sense." Badgerpool growled.

"Maybe we should just go back." The delicate voice of Poppyfall whispered. Badgerpool hissed and turned away in frustration. Poppyfall followed then stopped.

"You can come out now. He's gone." The ShadowClan cats exited the den carefully.

"Thank you Poppyfall." Shrewpath purred. The ThunderClan she cat nodded then ran off into the woods.

"She has been helping us lately." Shrewpath explained. Lilymist nodded and they followed Shrewpath and Wrenglow out of their territory.

It was long past Moonhigh when they returned to the camp. Lilymist ran to get Icestar and Berrysplash went to get Jasperheart and Frostspiral.

"ShadowClan is here." She called to Icestar. The leader crawled out of the shadows, her bright eyes glowing in the moonlight.

"Who do they want?" Icestar asked.

"They want an alliance and Jasperheart and Frostspiral. They have given us Wrenglow." Lilymist told Icestar.

"Send them off at once. You have been gone too long and Lakekit has died." Icestar meowed, with grief seething out of her words. Lilymist felt a stab of guilt. *I should have been faster.*

Chapter 40

Lilymist hurried off to help Wrenglow get settled in the nursery. Brightcloud had already introduced the kits and herself. Lilymist left the queen's alone and walked into her den to find Olivenose sitting awake in the den.

"You're home." He purred and padded towards her. She licked his forehead.

"You didn't have to stay up for me. You'll be tired in the morning." She meowed. He shrugged and twined his tail with hers.

"It's fine. I didn't want to miss you." He yawned. Lilymist guided him to their nest and settled down beside him. They slept in peace until dawn.

"Lilymist! Come here!" Someone yowled from the clearing. She shot up and ran outside, Olivenose following her. She gasped in shock when she saw the limp orange tabby lying in the dirt in front of her.

"It's Aban. What happened to him?" She choked out. The tom was bleeding badly. Claw marks lined his muzzle and his right ear was torn off. There were bite marks on his flanks and legs. He looked awful.

"We found him by the ThunderClan border. They must have found out about him and they did this." Sunfrost explained.

"ThunderClan definitely did that. I've seen it." Wrenglow emerged from the nursery. "My kits had the same ears ripped off and a bite mark on the left hind leg. They do it as a trophy." The queen stared at Aban in horror and memories clouded her green eyes. The queen was long furred and her fur was rather scruffy and dull. Her fur was light brown with pale ginger patches dusting her fur.

"I can't believe this." Lilymist whispered. She flinched when she saw a light flutter of his chest. "Get Pixiepath and Echomist! Now!" She

yowled at Rainstorm. Her mother ran off and go the two she cats. Pixiepath ran to the body and looked it over.

"He's suffering. There's nothing I can do. His throat is slashed and he's losing too much blood. Echomist." Pixiepath looked back at her mentor and nodded meaningfully. The silver bengal padded back into her den and brought out a leaf wrap. She stopped at the fresh kill pile and picked up a small shrew. Echomist slit the shrews belly open. She mashed the red berries into the shrews belly and pushed it towards Pixiepath.

"What are those?" Rainstorm asked.

"Deathberries." Pixiepath replied, with a voice that had no grief or regret, just determination. Pixiepath saw this as just another task. That was how she did it. She forgot they were cats and did the job, seeing them as work.

"Aban, I need you to eat this. It will be better soon. You can see your mother, Lucian and anyone else you want. Everything will be over soon." Pixiepath whispered. The tabby looked at her with gratefulness. He weakly ate the shrew and then sighed.

"Will I really see Mother again?" He rasped with a kit like fear.

"Yes. You will see everyone you ever wanted to see." Pixiepath meowed. She stroked his head with her tail and gazed at him with a strange love in her eyes.

"Thank you white one. I will miss you." He coughed before jerking around and then going still.

"We have to bury him. I know that he specifically loved the river." Pixiepath meowed, the dullness returning to her eyes. She grabbed his scruff and carefully dragged him to the river.

"Do you love him?" Lilymist whispered to Pixiepath. The medicine cat looked at her curiously.

"No, but I loved his freedom and stories. It's a shame he was killed." She meowed. Pixiepath sped up and Lilymist was left alone.

Authors Note

This has nothing to do with the book but I wanted to share it. I recently was going through papers from about 3 years ago and I found a list of my first warrior names.

Leader: Silverstream she cat with black fur and light brown eyes
She doesn't even have silver on her and it would be Silverstar

Deputy: Leopardfur beautiful golden she-cat with green eyes
Not bad little me

I apparently thought medicine cats weren't important because I didn't have one

Warriors

Starstruck: beautiful black she cat with green eyes
What was wrong with me

Bluestar: golden she cat with blue eyes
What

Apprentices

Goldenheart: brown she cat with ocean blue eyes
This is a warrior

Ravenpaw: brown curly furred she cat with palm tree green eyes
Why

Amberpaw: red she cat with brown eyes
Alright

Princesspaw: beautiful golden she cat with sky blue eyes
No

Butterflyscout: Red furred she-cat with brown eyes
What kind of name is that

Hope you enjoyed my stupidity as a child. I will make sure the next update will have something to do with the storyline.

Chapter 41

By sunhigh the whole Clan had heard about Aban. Most were horrified, but some warriors swore revenge on ThunderClan. The Clan had grown to love the orange tabby and now he was dead because of his curiosity and knowledge.

"We must attack immediately! It could be our kits next! What if the next cat found dead is Hailkit!" Appleglow protested. Berrysplash yowled his agreement.

"They have killed before and I don't want my daughter dead!" He screeched. Lilymist was afraid of her Clanmates for the first time since she was a young kit tumbling around nervously. She scrambled to Icestar's den and raced inside.

"The Clan knows about Aban. It's madness!" She gasped. Icestar quickly stood up and ran outside. She leaped up on the Tallstone. She looked around calmly.

"Who here wants a battle? Step forward if you do." She meowed. Appleglow, Berrysplash, Duskflower, Adderblaze, Jasperheart, Skygaze, Sparrowleaf and Cloudrunner all stepped forward.

"Good. Appleglow, Adderblaze. Cloudrunner and Jasperheart. Take a hunting patrol to the river. Grayheart go with them to keep them out of trouble. The rest of you will be helping the medicine cats for the day. We better put that anger to good use." She meowed with an irritating cheerfulness.

"What about Aban?" Adderblaze yowled. "Aren't we going to attack?"

"When you are leader Adderblaze, then you can decide who to attack, but for now you are going hunting and that is final." She commanded. "The ThunderClan border needs to be patrolled. Who wants to go?" Almost everyone started stepping forward and offering to go.

"Olivenose, Rainwhisker and Feathermist will be patrolling. The reason is that they didn't want to go which means they have no anger." She slyly meowed. "Dismissed." Icestar jumped off the Tallstone and sashayed away to her den. Lilymist looked around and decided that she would also go hunting. She let the patrol go out first and then left in the opposite direction of them. She sniffed around, enjoying the leaf fall weather. She caught the faint scent of crow. Lilymist flattened down and crept through the trees. She saw the crow and got ready to pounce. She sprang from the bush she was hiding behind and landed on the crows tail. It flapped to get away and Lilymist felt herself being pulled. She bared her teeth and bit into the bitter flesh of it's neck. The bird feebly flapped it's wings for a moment longer then went still. Lilymist caught herself being hypnotized by the graceful movement of the bird's wings. The ash coloured wings gently took off in flight when the crow was alive. Lilymist found beauty in the food they ate and the things they took for granted. She saw grace in the ivy growing on the oak trees. She saw love in the foxes protecting their cubs. She saw innocence in the fawns the sometimes pranced through the forest. She was drawn away from her thoughts when she felt like she was being watched. She gazed around the forest, her shoulders tense and claws unsheathed.

"I know you're there." She hissed. Her heart fell when she heard the shakiness in her voice. "Come out!"

She felt stupid when a sparrow flew out of a clump of bracken. Her ears burned and she was embarrassed by her mistake. She picked up her crow and trotted back to camp. She admired the golden brown leaves littering the ground. The few that still clung to the trees gently waved in the cool breeze. As she walked they crunched under her paws and she felt oddly satisfied. Lilymist reached camp and placed her crow on the fresh kill pile.

"Lilymist. There you are! I'm going to see Icestar and you are wanted with us." Brightcloud meowed as she walked past. Lilymist followed her to the leader's den and sat beside Icestar.

"My two are ready to be apprentices. Sunfrost's daughters aren't far behind either. I was wondering who would mentor them." Brightcloud explained. Icestar looked at Lilymist.

"As leader and deputy it's up to us to choose. Lilymist who do you think would be best for them?" Icestar asked. Lilymist knew this was a test.

"I think Adderblaze would be best for Hailkit. Hailkit tends to shy away from play fighting so I hope Adderblaze will be able to teach him. Stormkit is a dry paw so we need a great swimmer to teach him. I'm thinking Rainstorm should mentor him." She meowed thoughtfully.

"Not Rainstorm. Adderblaze will be perfect, but Rainstorm has requested to move to the elder's den. Along with Swanshine and Duskflower. Reedsplash will mentor Stormkit." Icestar interrupted. Lilymist pricked her ears in interest.

"Why now?" She muttered. Icestar shrugged.

"They're getting old. They have earned their places many times over." She yawned. "I'll hold the retirement ceremony and apprentice ceremony at sundown." Icestar clearly dismissed them as she sat down in her nest. Lilymist followed Brightcloud outside.

"How is Wrenglow settled in?" She asked. Brightcloud picked up a small pike from the fresh kill pile.

"Why don't you ask her yourself?" She replied cheekily. Lilymist purred and sat down to share the fish with her friend. Once they were finished Lilymist followed Brightcloud to the nursery.

"Hi Wrenglow! How are you settled in?" She asked cheerfully. The brown queen shifted around.

"Very good. You're Clan has been very kind to me. Skygaze even found pine needles for me." She purred. "Maplekit is a quiet little kit too. She's obedient and follows a strange little schedule. My kits were all over the place, changing their routines every day." Wrenglow stopped purring when she mentioned her kits. A flash of pain glazed her eyes for no more than a heartbeat.

"I heard the kits are becoming apprentices soon." She meowed, back to her cheerful self. "That will be wonderful." Wrenglow nudged her

nose into Maplekit's tortoiseshell fur. The kit let out a small squeal of protest.

"She so quiet sometimes I think I have to check her." Wrenglow explained. Lilymist stood up and stepped across the queen to Brightcloud.

"May I?" She asked the silver queen. Brightcloud got the hint and passed Lichenkit and Moonkit over. They looked up at her. Their eyes were fully coloured now. Lichenkit's were brown and Moonkit's were amber. Lilymist was mildly disappointed that neither had Owlheart's eyes.

"Hello little ones." She purred. They purred back and started swatting her tail. Lilymist winced as their tiny claws grabbed her tail. She was saved when Icestar called the Clan to a meeting. She padded out of the den to sit with her gathered Clan. She sat near the front with Olivenose. She gathered Lichenkit and Moonkit beside her. They stayed quiet, but Lilymist could tell they were excited for their denmates.

"Hailkit and Stormkit have reached their sixth moon and it's time for them to become apprentices. Hailkit step forward." The silver tom stepped forward nervously.

"Adderblaze." The brown tom stepped forward, pride surrounding him.

"You were taught well by Brightcloud and Grassheart. May you pass all you know onto Hailpaw." Icestar paused, allowing them to touch noses and creep back into the crowd.

"Stormkit step forward. Reedsplash, you were taught well by Lionscar. Pass all you know onto Stormpaw." Icestar announced.

"Hailpaw! Stormpaw! Hailpaw! Stormpaw!" The Clan cheered for the apprentices.

"There is another ceremony that needs to take place. Rainstorm, Duskflower and Swanshine wish to retire. I have accepted their offer since they have served the Clan for many moons. They were

born at around the same time as me." She called the three she cats forward.

"Is it your wish to become an elder?" Icestar asked.

"It is." The three meowed.

"Then you are now elders. I hope you enjoy the peaceful life you will have in retirement." Icestar dipped her head to the three. The black queen jumped off the Tallstone and walked over to her sister.

"You're getting pretty old yourself, Icestar." Rainstorm chuckled. Icestar butted her head into Rainstorm's shoulder.

"I've got two lives still keeping me up. I can't exactly retire either." Icestar laughed, but deep down Lilymist knew she sounded regretful. The leader was getting older and she knew that she was never to have the peaceful life an elder had. Lilymist suddenly felt her stomach churn. *Is that really what leadership is like? Will I ever be able to peacefully lie beside my brother and Olivenose as I grow old? Is this what I really want?*

Chapter 42

Lilymist congratulated the new elders on their retirement. She approached her mother carefully. She had not directly spoken to her for quite a long time.

"So you are an elder now, huh." Lilymist awkwardly meowed, shifting her paws uncomfortably. Rainstorm softly chuckled.

"No need to be nervous when you talk to me. I may have overreacted then, but now I know I was just afraid of losing my daughter." Rainstorm meowed wistfully. Lilymist felt her heart soar, but that moment lasted mere seconds before she was led away by the others. Lilymist smiled and walked towards Icestar.

"May I do some night hunting?" She cheerfully asked. Icestar nodded and then seriously stared at her. It looked like she was examining someone behind her and Lilymist turned to look over her shoulder. A brief flash of pale gold ruffled the bushes surrounding the camp. *Sunfrost.* Lilymist shrugged it off since he was heading in the direction of the dirtplace. She dipped her head to Icestar and padded out of the camp. She was enjoying her peaceful walk through the moonlight forest. The stars were shimmering like fireflies stuck against a dark ponds calm surface, blue, black and purple. The breeze ruffling her fur and blowing leaves around in little wind spirals. When Lilymist was a kit, Mintfur and Rowantail would tell tales of huge spirals of wind that would swallow entire forests. They said these small ones would not be powerful enough to cause any harm. Full of curiosity, Lilymist crept towards the wind spiral. She stepped inside of the swirling leaves and she was instantly breathless. The red, gold and brown leaves swirled in such beauty that reminded her of fire. *Fire. Fire. Grassheart...* Her happy, carefree mood was suddenly destroyed by the thought of her father. She stiffly walked out of wind spiral. Her eyes had glazed over from the thought of fire. Lilymist felt sick to her stomach. She walked around the forest until the queasy feeling in her belly left and she could concentrate again. She smelled vole and stalked it. She heard

something and she got sidetracked. The vole scurried away and Lilymist raced towards the sound of the noise. It was the ThunderClan border. Warriors were swarming over the surface of the grassy opening. Three warriors were trying to cross the stepping stones. She recognized their figures. *Foxbelly, Badgerpool and Brackenstar. Even the leader is here!* She started to silently weave her way through the night. She was almost back to camp when she was bowled over. She thrashed around and looked up at her attacker. A silhouette was dark against the night sky, with a white glow around it from the moonlight. The only visible feature was two cold, merciless amber eyes glaring at her.

Chapter 43

Lilymist flailed around trying to get the attacker off. She hissed and spat at them. This only made them angrier. They curled their claws around her shoulders and shook. Her head bounced around and hit the ground causing her to become dizzy. Everything became a swirling, dark nothing. Her eyes rolled back. She thought she smelled something familiar and opened her eyes wide. Lilymist studied the face of her attacker carefully until she recognized them.

"Lionscar! What are you doing? Why are you doing this!" She screeched. The tom chuckled and shifted his weight so she couldn't move, but he could comfortably sit. She gasped and his rear end sat firmly on her exposed belly. Lionscar calmly cleaned his face while staring at her.

"Are you crazy? Get off me, you useless lump!" She hissed. He glared at her and unsheathed his claws. He stuck one into her chest ever so slowly, as if a lot of thought had gone into this move. She snarled at him and tried flailing, but his weight stopped it.

"Oh shut up. I barely touched you." He apathetically meowed. She looked down her nose at her chest and saw he was right.

"This is my favourite part." He squealed like a little kit. "You listen and I'll tell my story, deal." Lionscar waved his tail excitedly. She stared at her brother in horror.

"Deal?!" He snarled and pushed his face closer to hers. She fearfully nodded. He relaxed and raised a claw to her eye.

"I could do exactly what I've been wanting to for moons. Scar your face so you look like me." He meowed wistfully and he appeared to be day dreaming until he looked back at her in fury.

"I won't though. Not quite yet. You will watch Olivenose and the kits be destroyed by ThunderClan first." Lionscar whispered.

"You arranged this?" She softly meowed. Lionscar chuckled and thrust his face into hers again.

"No this was all coincidental. It just worked out in my favour." He happily purred. *He's gone mad!* Lilymist stared at him in fear. She started quivering and her eyes went wide.

"No need to fear me. If you cooperate I'll make sure it was painless." He soothed. He licked in between her ears like a queen comforting her kit after a nightmare. He stared at her thoughtfully and then lightning quick, he reached his paw out and scratched her left eye. She howled in agony and flailed around again.

"I can't see! What have you done! What have you done!?" She screeched. Her left eye was bloody and torn. Lionscar wiped away the blood with his paw then purred.

"A nice clean slice. Perfect work if I do say so myself." He seemed proud of himself. *What kind of cat is proud of mutilating his kin?* Lilymist fearfully curled her tail around her hind legs. Lionscar looked at her with a ferocity that terrified her.

"Your yowls might attract attention and we can't have that now can we? Dear deputy, do you have anything to say?" He meowed, his voice sweet as honey.

"When I scarred you I must have scarred your heart. My brother would never do this to me. My brother loves his family!" She spat. Lionscar looked briefly taken aback. His eyes then hardened and his lips curled into a snarl.

"Then you don't know your brother that well." He raised his paw ready to strike when something shot out of the bushes and rolled him into the ground. Lilymist tried sitting up then fell back to the ground feeling dizzy from bloodloss. She saw flashes of action through her right eye. Sunfrost had come to her rescue. *Blink.* Lionscar's limp body lying beside a tree. *Blink.* Sunfrost dragging her through the night while yowling echoes from the battle with ThunderClan. *Blink.* Olivenose abandoning his fight with Badgerpool to run to his mate's side. He screamed her name, but she barely heard him. *Blink.* She's in the medicine den lying next to

a black cat and two brown cats. Icestar, Sparrowleaf and Skygaze.

Chapter 44

When Lilymist woke up she saw three cats leaning over her face. She let out a groan and one of them jumped to their feet and licked her chest. She sunk back into darkness.

Lilymist woke up again 2 days later and this time she managed to stay awake. She looked around the medicine den and shrieked. Her sight was gone on her left side. Pixiepath and Echomist rushed into the den and comforted her. Lilymist yowled and thrashed around.

"Let me go! Let me go! Lionscar let me go!" She screamed. Pixiepath continued comforting her while Echomist grabbed a couple poppy seeds.

"Lilymist, take these. We'll tell you everything once you take this." Echomist whispered. Lilymist fearfully licked up the seeds. She felt a soft calm run through her and she lay back down.

"One more thing Lilymist. Eat these." Echomist pushed some catmint towards her and Lilymist lapped them up. She felt even more calm and lay her head back.

"You promised to tell me." Lilymist reminded her. Echomist sighed and Pixiepath rested her tail on her mentors shoulder.

"That I did. We won the ThunderClan battle, but two warriors were injured and two were killed. Icestar and Grayheart are hurt and might not make it I'm afraid to say. Icestar lost a life in the battle. We lost Sparrowleaf and Skygaze. They were killed by Foxbelly. Brightcloud insisted on going to the battle and was there when he killed them. It was an accident, but Brightcloud was full of anger and grief. She lashed out without thinking and killed him." Echomist explained. Lilymist could see it pained the medicine cat to talk about losing her Clanmates.

"Does Jasperheart know?" Lilymist croaked. Echomist nodded her

head and let out a wail of grief.

"He's home now. Him and Adderblaze are grieving. Jasperheart blames himself does not being there for them. He hasn't left their graves. Adderblaze has been bringing him food and sleeping there with him. Cloudrunner joined Adderblaze too." Pixiepath meowed while stroking her sobbing mentor's shoulder with her tail.

"Are Lionscar and Sunfrost are okay?" Lilymist asked sadly.

"Sunfrost had dragged Lionscar off you and killed him for hurting you. There has been lots of death in the Clan these past 4 days." Pixiepath sighed. Lilymist suddenly panicked and breathed heavily.

"Where is Olivenose. Is he hurt?" She asked, praying to StarClan that he was alright.

"He is perfectly fine just a couple scratches. We sent him to his den to sleep. Would you like us to get him?" Pixiepath asked. Lilymist nodded and the white she cat padded away to get him. He appeared a moment later and curled around Lilymist. They said nothing, just nuzzled each other. Lilymist soon fell asleep, Olivenose rubbing his tail down her back and softly purring.

A low howl of grief spread through the camp. A half moon later and Icestar had died of infection. The Clan was grieving. It was the second night of vigil that Lilymist and Olivenose had finally went back to their own dens. Lilymist was grieving the most for Icestar. Grayheart had gotten worse so he might die as well. For another half moon the senior warriors ran the Clan until Lilymist was finally ready to lead. During that moon Echomist had retired and Wrenglow had gone home which meant Frostspiral came home. Lilymist had started her way to the StarPath with the guidance of Echomist.

Chapter 45

Lilymist looked back at Echomist, who nodded and sat down beside Lilymist. Lilymist closed her eyes and pressed her nose against the Moonstone. The stone was smooth and rough at the same time, ice cold and boiling hot. When she opened her eyes she saw cats. More cats than she had ever seen at a gathering. She stood up nervously and looked around her.

"There is no need to be afraid." She heard a voice behind her and spun around.

"Icestar!" Lilymist mewed in joy. She had missed the blue eyed she-cat.

"Yes I am Icestar." The StarClan warrior purred in amusement. Icestar leaned forward and touched her nose to Lilymist's head.

"I give you the life of leadership. May you use it to make RiverClan strong." Icestar gently mewed. Energy fizzed through Lilymist.

"Thank you." She dipped her head to Icestar. The black she cat was already walking away. Skygaze took her place.

"Oh Skygaze, I'm sorry." Lilymist quietly said. The blue eyed warrior just shrugged. Skygaze was killed in a battle with ThunderClan by the warrior Foxbelly. Adderblaze had been heart broken when his sister didn't return from the battle.

"It wasn't your fault. It was my time to join StarClan. I give you the life of training your apprentices well." Skygaze touched her nose to Lilymist's. Lilymist nodded and stepped back to steady herself. Skygaze padded away to sit beside Icestar. The cat who stood there surprised her.

"Grassheart?" Lilymist ventured carefully.

"Yes Lilymist. I'm here to give you the life of forgiveness. Please use

it wisely my kit." Grassheart ducked his head down to reach Lilymist's head. She felt a calm and easy feeling fill her. She looked back up at her father. She saw pride in his amber gaze. Before she knew it he had turned and walked to the ranks of StarClan. A small black kit came forward.

"Hi! I'm Ravenkit!" The small kit was so cheerful. "I'm here to give you the life of trust. Trust those around you when they say it will all be alright." Ravenkit balanced on his hind legs to touch his nose to Lilymist's nose.

"Do you want me to tell Duskflower anything?" She asked Ravenkit. The little kit looked back with sadness at hearing his mother's name.

"I miss her." He mewed quietly before turning and sitting beside Icestar. She felt sadness at hearing what Ravenkit had said. She looked up, hoping to see someone she knew. Before her, stood a large gray tom she didn't recognize.

"I see you are confused. My name is Stoneshade." The tom introduced himself. She dipped her head in response. "I died serving my Clan in battle. With this life I give you loyalty to the warrior code. Follow the code and you will be strong." He touched her forehead with his nose. She had a feeling of strength and power run through her veins. When the feeling had left her body she saw a she cat with fur as white as fresh snow.

"Snowbreeze." Lilymist dipped her head to the StarClan warrior. Snowbreeze smiled.

"Lilymist I now give you the life of happiness and humour. When the Clan seems dark, happiness and humour will make it seem bright." Snowbreeze licked Lilymist's forehead. It felt like she was a kit and she was bouncing around with joy. She thanked the white she cat and awaited her next life giver. A red tom walked up to her.

"I am Mapletail. I died before you were born. I was the mate of your mother's sister, Icestar." She dipped her head to Mapletail.

"With this life I give you strength, use it to defend your Clan from

any threats." He touched her forehead and pain jolted through her. It felt like Lilymist was in battle and sharp claws were slashing her pelt. She staggered after the pain was gone. She looked up and almost yowled in joy.

"Mintfur!" Lilymist lifted her head to lick the elder's cheek. When she did Mintfur let out a purr.
"I never could have predicted you becoming leader." Mintfur purred.

"I promised I would make you proud." Lilymist mewed.

"And that you did Lilymist. I now give you the life of controlling your grief. I hope with this life you will be stronger than I was." Mintfur whispered, regret faintly flashing in her blue eyes. The gray cat touched her nose to Lilymist's chest. She was filled with a feeling she could only describe as pain and then relief. Lilymist felt a pang at seeing her go.

"Your last life is mine to give." Lilymist turned around and saw the cat she thought about almost every day.

"Owlheart." Lilymist breathed. She didn't hesitate to run up to her sister. She rubbed her chin along Owlheart's face. They were both purring so loud it sounded like a Twoleg monster. When they were done the greeting Lilymist looked down and saw a golden brown kit hiding under Owlheart's belly. *Oh sweet Tigerkit.*

"My sister, I have been watching over you. I have watched you and you have strength, courage and loyalty, but there is one thing you don't have." Owlheart mewed with a voice as soft as kit fur.

"What is it?" Lilymist asked curiously.

"Hope. With this life I give you hope. When the times seem dark, hope will guide the way." Owlheart rubbed her chin along Lilymist's jaw. Lilymist saw a bright light ahead of her while darkness tried to swallow her. That is true hope.

"Please tell my daughters I miss them. And tell Sunfrost I love him." Owlheart quietly mewed. "We welcome you as the leader of

RiverClan! Lilystar! Lilystar! Lilystar!" Owlheart yowled. Lilystar basked in the yowls of approval. *I am Lilystar leader of RiverClan.* One by one the StarClan warriors disappeared. She woke up and saw Echomist staring at her with sadness.

"What's wrong?" Lilystar asked. The old medicine cat took a deep breath.

"I watched your leader ceremony. I saw some cats I thought I would never see again. I saw my family all right there, a couple tail lengths away yet I felt farther away from them than ever." Echomist drew a raspy breath. She was already retired, but she wanted to see Lilystar's ceremony.

"What is wrong with me is not important. RiverClan has a new leader and the Clan will want to know who their new deputy will be." Lilystar nodded.

"But who should I choose?" Lilystar asked. She wanted to have Echomist approve of her choice.

"I cannot help you with that decision, Lilystar. That is your own choice, but I know that deep down you know who should be your deputy." Echomist said as they started the long walk home.

Chapter 46

Lilystar sat in her den thinking about what Echomist said. *It's up to me to choose my own deputy.* Her first choice would have been Adderblaze, since he is mentor to Hailpaw he would be qualified. Olivenose would be her second choice, but that would mean when she dies her mate would be leader. She couldn't do that to him. She had wanted to make Grayheart her deputy then she remembered that he was dead. Duskflower, Swanshine and Rainstorm had become elders before the battle that had killed three warriors, Grayheart, Sparrowleaf and Skygaze. Sparrowleaf had attacked Foxbelly when she heard Skygaze was dead. Foxbelly defended himself and in the heat of battle he had shoved her against a tree and broke her spine. Brightcloud had gone to battle and had killed her former mate in revenge for her sister and niece. Grayheart had died from infection while she was returning to camp from the Moonstone. He refused to join the elder's den with the other warriors and Rainwhisker agreed not to join either. Lilystar was filled with grief and sadness when she learned that her mentor had died. *At least I still have Olivenose.* She realized with a jolt who she had to make deputy. She called a meeting.

"All cats old enough to swim gather beneath the Tallstone for a Clan meeting!" She yowled. Everyone already knew what the meeting was for and they were all expecting her to choose one of the senior warriors, Jasperheart, Rainwhisker or Brightcloud. She looked around her gathered clanmates. Her gaze landed on Echomist sitting beside Rainstorm. Echomist gave a nod, knowing who she had chosen. Lilystar raised her chin to speak when she remembered her days as a kit. She played with Owlheart, Olivenose, Lionscar and Sunfrost. A part of her heart longed to feel Lionscar beside her. Then she remembered what he did. He tried to murder Lilystar when she was first made deputy. She remembered a small promise she made all those moons ago. That promise decided who would be deputy. *Owlheart would approve.* She thought with longing for her sister. The overhanging lichen in front of the nursery swayed and Lilystar saw a beautiful silver tabby beside a pale gray she cat and a

red, brown and white tom. *Owlheart, Mintfur and Grassheart.* Lilystar felt a rush of hope and opened her mouth.

"The new deputy of RiverClan is Sunfrost." She yowled and looked around her Clan. Everyone started cheering his name and he climbed up the Tallstone. They dipped heads to each other.

"Thank you Lilystar. I promise to serve RiverClan well until the day I die." Sunfrost promised. Lilystar purred and stood up.

"I am proud to be your leader RiverClan. We are strong! We are loyal! We are powerful!" She yowled at her Clan. They took up the cheer and Lilystar thought that ShadowClan could probably hear their yowls. After the ceremony was over and everyone had stopped congratulating Sunfrost, he walked and sat beside her in front of her den.

"We did you choose me to be your deputy?" Sunfrost asked, curiosity lighting up his eyes. Lilystar looked at him.

"I promised you that when I was leader you would be my deputy." She purred. He looked momentarily confused.

"That was when we were kits." He mumbled. Lilystar raised her chin and spoke calmly.

"I always keep my promises."

"The son will force peace by bringing death. Only the frost, who's bite as cold as ice can stop the son."

THE END

Epilouge

Lilystar yowled in pain as her last kit was born. Pixiepath picked the small bundle up and gave it to Swanshine to clean. The elder insisted on helping Lilystar give birth to her kits. Swanshine rasped her tongue over the small kit's body. Lilystar sat back and closed her eyes, thankful that it was over. Olivenose crept into the den. Lilystar saw his eyes light up at the sight of his kits. He crossed the nursery in one leap. The gray tom bent his head to lick his mate's ears. Pixiepath looked up at the warrior and purred.

"You have three daughters and one son." Pixiepath announced. Olivenose purred and sniffed all of the kits.

"They're perfect." The tom whispered.

"What do you want to name them?"

"This one should be named Leopardkit, because of her fur." Lilystar flicked her tail at the kit. It was a golden brown she cat with spots that looked like a leopard's pattern.

"How about Sandkit for this little one." Olivenose nuzzled the one closest to him. The little kit was pale ginger with a pale gray belly.

"That's beautiful. Can we name the tom Stonekit?" Lilystar asked.

"We can name him kittypetkit if you really want." Olivenose purred. Lilystar rolled her eyes. Olivenose was always making fishbrained jokes like that. The tom kit was a pale gray tabby with dark gray paws.

"What should we name the last kit?" Lilystar asked, looking at her precious daughter. The small kit was black and white speckled. She looked up at her mate and saw that his eyes were glazed with sadness and happiness at the same time.

"Let's name her Owlkit. For Owlheart." Olivenose quietly mewed.

Lilystar purred and licked his chest. She felt a small paw hit her belly. She looked down and saw Stonekit scrabbling at her belly searching for milk. She purred and pushed him closer with her tail. She purred when she saw Leopardkit crawling over Owlkit. She pushed them in the right direction with her paw. She looked around in panic as she couldn't see Sandkit. She purred in relief when she saw Sandkit curled up with Olivenose. She gently picked up the gray bellied kit and put her next to her littermates. She leaned back with her head rested on Olivenose's belly.

"Leopardkit, Sandkit, Stonekit and Owlkit. Welcome to RiverClan, my beautiful kits." Olivenose's deep purr rumbled. *RiverClan is finally in peace.* Lilystar closed her eyes and fell asleep beside her mate.

Fun Facts!

Okay so now that this is done I can say all the things I've been wanting to the whole time!

1). Owlheart was not supposed to die. I just thought that family death would be better since she was so lovable.

2). This was originally going to be about Lionscar and all his thoughts.

3). I had planned on Raggedmoon falling in love with Lilymist.

4). Cloudrunner and Adderblaze were going to be brothers.

5). Lilymist would die in battle and the rest of the story would be Olivenose's depression and eventually his death.

6). Cloudrunner was going to be deputy.

7). Lilymist was going to be named Sandypath. Owlheart was going to be Winterbreeze. Lionscar was going to be Lionsun. Sunfrost was going to be Frostfire. Olivenose was going to be Willowwind.

8). Icestar was supposed to die in the fire instead of Grassheart.

9). Owlhearts kits were going to be killed by a fox, that Sunfrost would try killing in revenge for his kits and would die trying.

10). Dapplekit, Thornkit and Lakekit were going to live.

11). Cursedkit was going to be adopted into WindClan and would swear revenge on her RiverClan family.

12). Silverdust was originally called Foxwillow.

13). Duskflower was going to be named Nightwhisker. Icestar was going to be Ivystar. Swanshine was Starshine. Cloudrunner was Swiftbreeze. Skygaze was going to be Skybelly.

14). Duskflower and Grayheart were going to have three kits named Wolfspirit, Nightwhisper and Swiftbreeze.

15). Olivenose and Lilymist were going to have three kits named Stormheart, Mintclaw and Foxpelt.

16). Reedsplash, Feathermist and Ravenkit were never supposed to be born. Frostspiral was going to be Owlheart and Sunfrost's kit.

17). Rainwhisker and Brightcloud were never going to be mates. Brightcloud was going to leave to be with Foxbelly.

18). All of these cats are based off strays I see around my town.

19). Jasperheart and Sparrowleaf were my first OC mates. I created them when I was 11. Although the looks were totally different. Jasperheart started as a pale gray tom with deep green eyes. Sparrowleaf was a tortoiseshell with yellow eyes. I changed their appearances because I wanted them to have rather plain appearances to emphasize their personalities.

20). I wanted Sparrowleaf to be the medicine cat, but then that would mean getting rid of Adderblaze and Skygaze. I kept it the original way because I liked AdderRunner. (Adderrunner and Cloudblaze are awesome sounding names btw. Free for the taking!)

21). Sunfrost died before he could become leader. He was put in the dark forest because he killed a cat. Icestar was also sent there along with Foxbelly. They have their own little corner of the forest and refuse to interact with the other members.

Over and Out.